



April 22, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Room 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 2104 (Soria) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wicks:

California is in the midst of a health care workforce crisis. Even prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state had a significant shortage of trained health care employees. In its aftermath, the workforce shortage has only grown worse. According to a [study](#) by University of California, San Francisco, California had a deficit of 40,000 registered nurses in 2021, and this number is likely to have increased since then. This critical issue underscores the importance of innovative solutions to address the health care workforce shortage.

This is why the California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems, is proud to support Assembly Bill (AB) 2104 (Soria, D-Fresno), which would require the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program at 15 community college districts.

Community colleges play a vital role in providing accessible and quality postsecondary education, particularly for students facing financial and logistical challenges. By expanding baccalaureate degrees in nursing to community colleges, AB 2104 would empower more students to pursue higher education in nursing which will help meet the demand for highly qualified nurses in health care settings. Additionally, because community colleges serve a more diverse student population, the nursing workforce will become more reflective of the communities it serves, leading to better patient care and outcomes.

Finally, because many hospitals now prefer nurses to hold baccalaureate degrees to meet accreditation and quality standards, AB 2104 will provide graduates with more job opportunities and avenues for career advancement.

For these reasons, CHA requests your “AYE” vote on AB 2104.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Gonzalez

Vanessa Gonzalez
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Esmeralda Soria
The Honorable Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee
Natasha Collins, Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Joe Shinstock, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus