

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 19, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 24

Introduced by Assembly Member Bonilla

January 24, 2012

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 24—Relative to the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement ~~Act~~ Acts of 2011 *and 2012*.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AJR 24, as amended, Bonilla. Proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement ~~Act~~ Acts of 2011 *and 2012*.

This measure would urge the members of California’s congressional delegation to sign on as cosponsors of, and request that the Congress and the President of the United States enact, the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2011 *or the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2012*.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, The American Academy of Pediatrics emphasizes
2 the crucial role school nurses have in the seamless provision of
3 comprehensive health services to children and youth, as well as
4 in the development of a coordinated school health program; and
5 WHEREAS, The school nurse functions as a leader and the
6 coordinator of the school health services team, facilitating access
7 to a medical home for each child and supporting school
8 achievement; and

1 WHEREAS, The school nurse is often the only health care
2 provider that a child has and can ensure that basic health needs are
3 met; and

4 WHEREAS, Recent national data indicates 45 percent of public
5 schools have a school nurse all day, every day, while another 30
6 percent of schools have a school nurse who works part time in one
7 or more schools; and

8 WHEREAS, There is just one school nurse for every 4,000
9 pupils in California, which is well below the national standard of
10 one nurse for every 750 pupils. There are no school nurses at all
11 in 15 California counties; and

12 WHEREAS, The dearth of nurses has left many schools
13 struggling to cope with rising rates of childhood illnesses such as
14 asthma, food allergies, diabetes, and seizure disorders; and

15 WHEREAS, The American Nurses Association has reported
16 that, when there is no registered nurse on the school premises, the
17 responsibility to administer the necessary medications and
18 treatments, and to carry out appropriate monitoring of the children,
19 falls on the shoulders of administrators, educators, and staff, who
20 are ill-prepared to perform these tasks; and

21 WHEREAS, Statistics from the National Center for Education
22 Statistics indicate that, of the 52,000,000 children who currently
23 spend their day in schools, 16 percent have chronic physical,
24 emotional, or other health problems; and

25 WHEREAS, A recent study indicated that from 2002 to 2008,
26 inclusive, the percentage of children in special education with
27 health impairments, due to chronic or acute health problems,
28 increased 60 percent. Within this group the rate of autism has
29 doubled since 2002; and

30 WHEREAS, A 40-percent increase in asthma has been seen in
31 the past 10 years, along with a nearly 50-percent increase in the
32 incidence of diabetes in the same time period; and

33 WHEREAS, Nearly 10 percent of schoolage children in
34 California suffer from asthma; and

35 WHEREAS, According to the American Academy of Pediatrics,
36 students today face increased social issues as well as the need for
37 preventative services and interventions for acute and chronic health
38 issues; and

39 WHEREAS, The *federal* Centers for Disease Control and
40 Prevention report that the percentage of children without health

insurance was 8.9 percent in 2008, and with over 1,300,000 homeless children in the United States, schools have become the only source of health care for many children and adolescents; and

WHEREAS, Communicable and infectious diseases account for millions of school days lost each year. There is reported evidence that school nurses have a positive impact on immunization rates, with fewer parent-requested exemptions; and

WHEREAS, A recent study showed that students with health concerns attended to by school nurses were able to return to class 95 percent of the time, while students attended to by unlicensed staff were only able to return to class 82 percent of the time; and

WHEREAS, The presence of a school nurse leads to increases in student attendance and the units of average daily attendance that a school district may claim; and

WHEREAS, Using a formula-based approach for determining a balanced student-to-school nurse ratio offers a reasonable means for achieving better outcomes; and

WHEREAS, The federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2011 (HR 2229)—~~has and the federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2012 (S 2047)~~ have been introduced in Congress with the purpose of reducing the student-to-school nurse ratio in public elementary schools and secondary schools; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature respectfully urges the members of California’s congressional delegation to sign on as cosponsors of the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2011 (HR 2229) *or the proposed federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2012 (S 2047);* and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature respectfully requests that the Congress and the President of the United States enact the federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2011 (HR 2229) *or the federal Student-to-School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2012 (S 2047);* and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative

- 1 from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the
- 2 author for appropriate distribution.

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