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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION



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Ann Steffanic, Board Administrator  
State Board of Nursing  
P.O. Box 2649  
Harrisburg, Pa. 17105-2649


As chairperson of the Nursing Department at Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania, I am submitting comments regarding the proposed regulations to increase the minimum passage rate for nursing education programs. I support the need to increase the minimum passage rate for first time test takers to 70 percent. However, increasing the passage rate to 80 percent two years following final rulemaking does not provide nursing programs ample time to implement and evaluate strategies and their effectiveness in meeting the Board's proposed changes.

Following review of the National Council Licensure Examination results for registered nurses 10/1/07 through 12/31/07 reveals several nursing programs would fail to meet the 80 percent requirement if this standard was implemented at this time. Hence, several nursing programs in the Commonwealth would be placed on provisional status by the Board.

As a result of the proposed amendments set forth by the Board, nursing programs will be forced to implement stringent admission criteria, decrease enrollment, increase GPA requirements, increase grading scales, and utilize standardized exams as a means to weed out students prior to graduation. These changes could affect the numbers of potential registered nurses in the Commonwealth, and have a direct impact on the nursing shortage.

I would like to ask the Board to reconsider the proposed regulations and allow nursing programs the opportunity to develop, implement, and evaluate strategies to meet the projected standards.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide written comments to the Board regarding the proposed changes to the minimum pass rates for program graduates on the licensure exam (NCLEX).

Sincerely,  
  
Therese M. Sayers, RN, MS  
Chairperson, Department of Nursing