

# Senate Health & Human Services

March 22, 2023



## Roll Call

Chair: Lois Kolkhorst - Present  
Vice-chair: Charles Perry - Present  
César Blanco - Present  
Bob Hall - Present  
Kelly Hancock - Present  
Bryan Hughes - Present  
Morgan LaMantia - Present  
Borris L. Miles - Present  
Kevin Sparks - Present

## Resources

[Hearing notice](#)

Videos of hearing

- [Part 1](#)
- [Part 2](#)

## Bills

### SB 25

#### Kolkhorst

Part of a comprehensive package to dramatically increase funding for the nursing workforce. Revises and amends existing scholarship and loan program, which has not been funded in many years. Expands faculty loan repayment program, will allow part-time faculty to access this. Will address the nursing workforce challenge. When it goes to the floor, one little part needs to be fixed with an amendment, but the bill looks good other than that.

**Killeen Marzella, TNA**

TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH PLANS

Meeting Update–March 22, 2023

476-2091

Jamie Dudensing, CEO

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Support. Over 30,000 nurses short from meeting demand. The pandemic put us in a bad position. The scholarship program will allow us to bring in talent from lower income families. This legislation helps support the nursing innovation grant program, which will address many challenges.

**Heather De La Garza**, Texas Hospital Association

Support. Hospitals facing significant workforce challenges. RN vacancy rates doubled from 2020 to 2022. Center estimates it takes 61 days to refill a position. Access to care is being affected; an unsustainable situation. The sooner we implement solutions, the better.

**Elizabeth Murwin**, University of Texas at Arlington Nursing

Support. As a nurse, I am pleased with these discussions. UT Arlington is the largest producer of nurses in Texas. This bill will address workforce shortages.

**Kolkhorst**: UTA turned down how many applicants?

**Murwin**: 1700 to 1800 applicants to pre licensure RN programs, across the country 91,000 applicants.

**Kolkhorst**: Look forward to working with y'all and making this a model bill for the country.

**Perry**: What does an education cost for an RN?

**Murwin**: Imagine it's around 30,000 but can get exact information.

**Diane Santamaria**, UTHSC Houston School of Nursing

On the bill. Seen decline of applications. This profession is needed especially in rural settings, as well as primary care settings. Need to incentivise young people to join this profession. Faculty is driving the shortage, because we don't have enough people to educate. Supports the bill as an individual.

**Elise Meyer**, Leading Age Texas

Support. Overall impact of the nursing shortage is well known. Nursing homes are disproportionately impacted by this shortage. 2022 long term care staffing study highlights vacancy rates. Highest vacancy rates in the state, across all health care settings, sits at 27.3%.

## **SB 299**

**Hall** (part 2, 2:08:00)

Patient doctor relationships are personal and very important. When a patient experiences a health care emergency and is admitted to hospital, there is no guarantee a personal doctor can oversee treatment. Bill would require that hospitals allow a physician to oversee care of patients after being admitted to hospital, regardless of whether the physician has hospital privileges there. Sb 299 would provide liability immunity to these physicians.

### **Dr. Farella**

Pediatrician. Disconnect now where outpatient physicians seem to be left out with patients in hospitals. This includes care with old medications, etc.

**Kolkhorst:** Don't most doctors, if you are referring someone to a hospital, always have communication?

**Farella:** No. Plenty of times my patient will be admitted to an emergency room and I don't find out until after. No longer able to directly admit.

**Kolkhorst:** Do the hospitalists communicate with you?

**Farella:** Some do, many don't.

**Hall** speaks to the importance of continuity of doctor seeing patient.

Bill left pending.