

Hello Members of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. As I said in my comments, a member brought to my attention that home health and hospice agencies were not included in the strategic plan advisory group on the nursing and primary care workforce in Section 1 – 18 VSA 9491 (b)(1). We've been supporting this bill as part of a coalition originally formed for the Rural Health Services Task Force and then re-convened for COVID-19 and I'm embarrassed to confess I simply failed to notice the omission!

Given the impact of the nursing workforce shortage on home health and hospice agencies, we think it's important that our perspective be included on this group. While there are many workforce development strategies that apply to all organizations that hire nurses, there are also workforce training, recruitment and retention issues that are home health and hospice-specific, and not always known to other providers.

Thank you for considering this request.

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