

Senate Economic Development and Commerce Committee
Meeting notes

Thursday, April 7, 2022

H. 703 - An act relating to promoting workforce development

Rep. Anne B. Donahue, House Committee on Health Care

Donahue states there are three areas that need focus – the mental health workforce, the nursing workforce, entire workforce as a whole.

Chairman Sirotkin needs exact price amounts for mental health scholarship program.

Chairman Sirotkin asks for clarification about why complete cost of bill is not in the bill – Donahue doesn't have an answer.

Sen. Clarkson is curious about the calculations of mentored hours for nurses – she wants to know what the expectations are in teaching hospitals versus other hospitals.

Chairman Sirotkin asks if there's anything the Feds are doing to increase the number of nurses in hospitals. Donahue does not have any evidence of federal support from Sanders.

Sen. Clarkson and Chairman Sirotkin ask what happens after the 1-year of the bridge program – Donahue states that there a lot of language about it being their responsibility after the year.

Sen. Clarkson the nursing department is so large – with four organizations (Department of Health, AHEC, VSEC, and OPR overseeing, the committee believes there needs to better integration of workforce. Donahue states there are intentions for this – this enables restructuring and accounting for overlapping.

Chairman Sirotkin asks how they can prevent UVM from sucking up all the money – Donahue assured there are geographic controls.

Sen. Clarkson has goal to reduce licensure issues – big workforce development it is a big problem

Sen. Clarkson asks why the VT Care board is not more included in this.

Janet McLaughlin, Executive Director, VT Association for the Education of Young Children
Sarah Kenney, Chief Policy Officer, Let's Grow Kids

McLaughlin focuses on pre-apprenticeship program (for high school CTE students), the student loan payment program, early child outreach and recruitment program.

Chairman Sirotkin asks why Let's Grow Kids is not asking for a lot – McLaughlin states that the adjustments in the budget was important, but these are two small points that has leverage.

Sen. Clarkson and Chairman Sirotkin ask about the continuum – McLaughlin states the organization are mostly early childhood educators, there is 7 members of the staff.

Sen. Clarkson asks how many apprentices and new hires would McLaughlin need – estimated 2,000 additional educators to meet capacity and 500 per year – mapping the pipeline is her focus.