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MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

May 10, 2022

To: Members of the Hudson Valley Delegation of the New York State Legislature
From: Michael N. Romita, President & CEO of the Westchester County Association
Re: CLINICAL TRAINING SIMULATION LEGISLATION: S.6717-A – on Senate Higher Education Committee Agenda, 5/10/22 A.7767-A – in Assembly Higher Education Committee

Bill Summary: Allow for up to one-third of simulation training to count towards clinical practice

The Westchester County Association (“WCA”) is a professional membership organization comprising a diverse group of businesses and nonprofits that rely on us to advocate for policies and laws to foster economic development in the region and meet the needs of our communities. WCA’s members include hundreds of the region’s foremost organizations in industries as diverse as healthcare, real estate, finance, law, energy, technology, hospitality, and higher education which collectively employ hundreds of thousands of workers.

Amongst the WCA’s primary focus areas for a stronger regional economy is encouraging a strong and vibrant healthcare community. Central to achieving that is an adequate workforce pipeline, particularly as it relates to nursing. The pandemic only exacerbated an already dire nursing shortage across our State.

S.6717-A/A.7767-A would greatly help resolve the statewide nursing shortage. Clinical simulation experiences are a critically important component of nursing education. Current law allows for the use of clinical simulation in the nursing curriculum but does not allow the simulation experience to count toward the clinical training hours required to complete a degree program. This legislation would permit one-third of the clinical training required for registered professional nurses, licensed practical nurses and nurse practitioners to be provided in a simulation experience. Nursing programs also could apply to the Education Department for permission to increase the number of simulation hours beyond that threshold.

As the practice of nursing has become more complex, simulation labs have become increasingly more sophisticated to meet the instructional needs of students and contribute to their safe entry into practice. In addition to introducing students to the treatments, technologies and electronic medical records that they will face when they enter the workforce, simulation labs help students safely develop clinical and critical-thinking skills through immersion in real-life scenarios.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, simulation labs have become even more important as the lack of PPE, staff challenges and surge of patients has limited hospitals' ability to host clinical rotations. **A serious shortage of nurses persists across the state, and we expect clinical placements for nursing students to be a challenge for the foreseeable future. This legislation will allow nursing schools to extend scarce faculty and preceptor resources and allow students to complete their educational programs on time. S.6717-A/A.7767-A is important to the development of the next generation of nurses.** We urge your support for the legislation.

For these reasons, the Westchester County Association strongly supports this legislation.