

Sen. Cowles: Applauds action by Board of Nursing on COVID-19

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MADISON– Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) released the following statement after the Board of Nursing proposed changes that would allow nursing students who have completed 75% of their clinical hours and out-of-state nurses to practice in Wisconsin. The Board also proposed allowing nurses who've recently retired or let their license lapse to be quickly reinstated with no fees for one-year. The move requires action by Governor Evers to ratify these changes:

“As Wisconsin health care providers and hospital administrators navigate this unprecedented event, I’m very pleased to see the Board of Nursing work to react in real time to the circumstances presented by this public health emergency. Nurses, particularly in hospitals, are the backbone of Wisconsin’s strong health care industry and the key to quality care. As some hospitals deal with an influx of patients and others prepare for this potential, having a larger health care workforce while still ensuring the delivery of quality care is an important step in these trying times.”

“I applaud the action by the Board of Nursing, and hope to see Governor Evers make the necessary changes to solidify these actions as soon as possible.”

A recent forecast by the Wisconsin Center for Nursing projects a shortage of 1,000 nurses beginning in 2020 with demand continuing to outpace supply in the future. With the outbreak of COVID-19 requiring that some nurses and other providers remain quarantined if they present with symptoms of COVID-19, in addition to the extra burden placed on some hospitals during this outbreak, its unknown what the true shortage of nurses in hospitals is currently in comparison to the 2018 projection.