



STATE OF MAINE  
BOARD OF NURSING  
158 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0158

JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

KIM ESQUIBEL, PHD, M.S.N., R.N.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 7, 2023

Stacy Brenner  
State Senator  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333  
Email: [stacy.brenner@Legislature.maine.gov](mailto:stacy.brenner@Legislature.maine.gov)

Re: Maine Registered Nurse (RN) Workforce Data

Dear Senator Brenner:

The State Board of Nursing (BON) licenses and regulates licensed practical nurses, registered professional nurses and advanced practice registered nurses in Maine. The Board's mission is to protect the public health and welfare in the area of nursing service.

This letter is to provide information on BON nursing workforce data which is vastly different from testimony provided at the public session and work session on LD 1639 *An Act to Address Unsafe Staffing of Nurses and Improve Patient Care*. Specifically, information referenced to be provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics that "Maine has more RNs than ever" and "the difference between the number of employed RNs and active RN licenses in Maine is more than 12,000 RNs!" While the number of working RNs has indeed increased slightly over the past several years, the BON workforce minimum data set does not support there being 12,000 active RNs in Maine not working.

The BON workforce minimum data set is collected upon licensure application. The minimum workforce data set questions are a part of the application and are required to be completed prior to submitting the on-line application.

Workforce data collected by the BON for 2021-2022 showed that 88% of the Maine active RN workforce were actively employed in nursing and 12% of the active RN workforce reported they were not working in nursing. Data on RNs not working showed that 6% percent of RNs in Maine with active licenses reported that they were retired. Only 3% of Maine's active RNs were unemployed with the top reason being "Taking care of home and family." Three (3) percent of the total number of active Maine RNs (27,767) in 2021 is approximately 833 RNs. Three (3) percent of the total number of active Maine RNs in 2022 (28,798) is approximately 864 RNs.



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While the BON takes no position on LD 1639, it is important to clarify that the minimum workforce data set collected by the Maine BON is an accurate depiction of the active RN workforce in Maine. Three percent unemployment of the total active Maine RN workforce does not align with testimony provided that there are 12,000 unemployed active Maine licensees.

I would be happy to provide more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Esquibel". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kim Esquibel, PhD, MSN, MPA, RN  
Executive Director

Cc: Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing  
Maine State Nurses Association  
Organization of Maine Nurse Leadership  
Maine Hospital Association