

NURSING SHORTAGE

1 Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, is committed to advocating for
2 quality healthcare and is deeply concerned about the shortage of nurses in health care
3 institutions throughout the United States.

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5 The nursing shortage poses a threat to the quality of patient care and national security in
6 the event of mass casualties. Hospitals around the country report emergency room
7 overcrowding, ambulance diversion and surgery delays and cancellations because there
8 are not enough nurses. In a recent study, published in the Journal of the American
9 Medical Association, researchers showed a direct correlation between nurses' workloads
10 and patient survival.

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12 Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, therefore, resolves to advocate
13 for policies to correct this critical shortage of nurses and ensure quality care. We
14 commend the federal government for enacting the Nurse Reinvestment Act in 2002,
15 which authorizes nurse scholarships, student loan forgiveness programs for nurses who
16 will serve as nursing faculty, training grants for geriatric-care nurses and public service
17 announcements to promote the nursing profession. However, the Act does not provide
18 funding for these programs. We, therefore, urge the federal government to fully fund the
19 programs authorized in the Nurse Reinvestment Act. We also call upon the federal and
20 state governments to continue to enact and fund nursing shortage legislation that:

- 21 • promotes the training, recruitment and retention of quality nurses, including nurses
22 who have advanced practice;

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- 23 • improves working conditions for nurses, including decreased patient-loads and
- 24 increased wages and benefits, supportive services and opportunities for advancement;
- 25 • encourages the training of nurses to be prepared to respond to mass casualties; and
- 26 • helps raise the public profile of the nursing profession.