

## House Bill 475

By: Representatives Cooper of the 41<sup>st</sup>, Harbin of the 118<sup>th</sup>, Lindsey of the 54<sup>th</sup>, Houston of the 170<sup>th</sup>, Wilkinson of the 52<sup>nd</sup>, and others

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT**

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 26 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to the "Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act," so as to revise certain  
3 provisions relating to requirements for registered professional nurses in nontraditional  
4 nursing education programs; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and  
5 for other purposes.

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Article 1 of Chapter 26 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the  
9 "Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act," is amended by revising Code Section  
10 43-26-7, relating to requirements for licensure as a registered professional nurse, as follows:  
11 "43-26-7.

12 (a) Any applicant who meets the requirements of this Code section shall be eligible for  
13 licensure as a registered professional nurse.

14 (b) An applicant for licensure by examination shall:

15 (1) Submit a completed written application and fee;

16 (2) Have graduated from a nursing education program approved by the board or which  
17 meets criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established by the board. For  
18 purposes of this paragraph, a nontraditional nursing education program that:

19 (A) Provides concurrent instruction in theory along with clinical teaching and clinical  
20 practice for its program participants;

21 (B) Requires that program participants complete a minimum of 800 hours of clinical  
22 practice;

23 (C) Arranges the participant's clinical practice in such settings and with such  
24 supervision as approved by the board; and

25 (D) Only accepts licensed practical nurses licensed in states with requirements for such  
26 licensure equivalent to or greater than Georgia requirements into the program

is hereby deemed to meet criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established by the board. The board shall be authorized to approve individual waiver requests for students who, prior to July 1, 2008, entered a nontraditional nursing education program which does not meet the requirements of this paragraph and completes such program no later than July 1, 2010. For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'nontraditional nursing education program' means a program which provides instruction in theory primarily by self-study, including online courses, and the term 'clinical practice' shall mean face-to-face supervised clinical instruction with actual patients in a variety of patient settings, including, but not limited to, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical, emergency, and mental illness;

(3) Pass a board recognized licensing examination; provided, however, that such examination may not be taken prior to graduation from the nursing education program;

(4) Have satisfactory results from a fingerprint record check report conducted by the Georgia Crime Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as determined by the board. Application for a license under this Code section shall constitute express consent and authorization for the board or its representative to perform a criminal background check. Each applicant who submits an application to the board for licensure by examination agrees to provide the board with any and all information necessary to run a criminal background check, including, but not limited to, classifiable sets of fingerprints. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees associated with the performance of such background check; and

(5) Meet such other criteria as established by the board.

(c) An applicant for licensure by endorsement shall:

(1) Submit a completed written application and fee;

(2) Have passed a board recognized licensing examination following graduation from a nursing education program, including a nontraditional program, approved by the board or which meets criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established by the board;

(3) Submit verification of initial and current licensure in any other licensing jurisdiction administering a board recognized licensing examination;

(4)(A) Have practiced nursing as a registered professional nurse for a period of time as determined by the board or have graduated from a nursing education program within the four years immediately preceding the date of the application; or

(B) If graduated from a nontraditional nursing education program, have practiced nursing as a registered professional nurse in a hospital setting for at least two of the five years immediately preceding the date of the application and such practice is documented by the applicant and approved by the board;

(5) Have satisfactory results from a fingerprint record check report conducted by the Georgia Crime Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as determined by the board. Application for a license under this Code section shall constitute express consent and authorization for the board or its representative to perform a criminal background check. Each applicant who submits an application to the board for licensure by examination agrees to provide the board with any and all information necessary to run a criminal background check, including, but not limited to, classifiable sets of fingerprints. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees associated with the performance of such background check; and

(6) Meet such other criteria as established by the board.

(d) An applicant for reinstatement who has previously held a valid license in Georgia shall:

(1) Submit a completed written application and fee;

(2) Have practiced nursing as a registered professional nurse for a period of time as determined by the board or have graduated from a nursing education program approved by the board or which meets criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established by the board within the four years immediately preceding the date of the application;

(3) Have satisfactory results from a fingerprint record check report conducted by the Georgia Crime Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as determined by the board. Application for a license under this Code section shall constitute express consent and authorization for the board or its representative to perform a criminal background check. Each applicant who submits an application to the board for licensure by examination agrees to provide the board with any and all information necessary to run a criminal background check, including, but not limited to, classifiable sets of fingerprints. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees associated with the performance of such background check; and

(4) Meet such other criteria as established by the board."

## SECTION 2.

92 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.