SENATE, No. 4588

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Sponsored by:
Senator BENJIE E. WIMBERLY
District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Provides funds to expand nursing education at William Paterson University of New Jersey; appropriates $2 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT appropriating funds for the Nursing Simulation Laboratory at William Paterson University.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. New Jersey continues to experience a critical shortage of qualified nurses, increasing the demand for highly educated health care professionals prepared to meet the evolving needs of patients and communities.

b. William Paterson University plays a vital role in educating the next generation of registered nurses and other health care professionals who serve hospitals, long-term care facilities, community health organizations, schools, and other health care settings throughout the State.

c. Hands-on experiential learning through simulation-based education is an essential component of nursing education. Modern nursing skills laboratories provide students with opportunities to develop clinical judgment, technical proficiency, patient communication, teamwork, and critical thinking in a safe and controlled environment before entering clinical placements and the health care workforce.

d. Expanding the Nursing Simulation Laboratory at William Paterson University will increase instructional capacity, enhance student learning, support enrollment growth, improve workforce readiness, and strengthen the pipeline of qualified nurses entering New Jersey's health care system; and

e. Investing in workforce stabilization within the Nursing School of William Paterson University will assist in recruiting and retaining qualified nursing faculty, expanding educational capacity, supporting innovative teaching methods, and ensuring students receive the high-quality education necessary to meet the health care needs of the State.

2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to William Paterson University of New Jersey the sum of $2,000,000 to expand and modernize the Nursing Simulation Laboratory at the university. The funds shall overall enhance experiential learning opportunities for nursing program students at the university and better prepare those students to be part of the nursing workforce. Funds appropriated pursuant to this section may be used for purposes including, but not limited to:

a. renovating, expanding, and modernizing the facilities of the Nursing Simulation Laboratory;

b. acquiring high-fidelity patient simulators, simulation technology, medical equipment, audiovisual systems, instructional technology, and laboratory furnishings;

c. developing realistic clinical simulation environments that replicate acute care, community health, maternal-child health, pediatric health, behavioral health, emergency care, and long-term care settings;

d. purchasing necessary instructional equipment, supplies, and educational technology to support competency-based nursing education;

e. expanding experiential learning opportunities that prepare students for the successful transition into clinical practice and the health care workforce;

f. recruiting, retaining, and providing professional development to nursing program faculty and clinical educators; and

g. supporting workforce stabilization initiatives that enhance the capacity of the university's Nursing School to educate and graduate additional qualified nurses.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill provides funds for the expansion of nursing education at William Paterson University.

Specifically, the bill appropriates $2 million from the General Fund to William Paterson University of New Jersey to expand and modernize the Nursing Simulation Laboratory at the university. The funds would overall enhance experiential learning opportunities for nursing program students at the university, increase educational capacity, strengthen faculty recruitment and retention, and better prepare nursing program students to be part of the health care workforce.