



NEWS BRIEF:

New Law Will Lead to More Delaware Nurses

AUGUST 1, 2019 – A bill seeking to bolster the number of nurses in The First State was signed into law yesterday (7/31) by Gov. John Carney.

Drafted by State Rep. Bryan Shupe, R-Milford South, the [Nursing Incentive Bill](#) will increase the availability of nursing scholarships offered through the Delaware Department of Education by broadening the eligibility criteria to include non-profit hospitals and health care practices. The scholarships had previously applied only to positions in state-operated facilities.

"This bill expands the program to non-profit hospitals, which are pretty much all of our hospitals in Delaware," Rep. Shupe said at the signing ceremony in Dover. "We were very thankful to have had bipartisan support in the House and Senate and to give those people seeking a career in nursing more opportunities to do so in Delaware."

Rep. Shupe noted that the new law will not have any significant impact on state taxpayers.

Shana Payne, Director of Higher Education for the Delaware Department of Education, said adjusting the program will make a real difference. "We had students every year that

declined this award because they knew they would not be able to find the employment to meet the forgiveness criteria," she said. "Now we have almost a hundred applicants in this year alone."

State Rep. Michael Smith, R-Pike Creek, a co-sponsor of the bill, said it addresses a huge need. "Looking at this legislation as a model, we may be able to expand this to other health professions as well," he said. "There is a big need for health care professionals in Delaware and as our aging population continues to age, that need will only increase."