

Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act (H.R.7279/S.3707)

H.R.7279 was introduced on January 30, 2026 by Reps. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR-01), David Joyce (R-OH-14), Jennifer Kiggans (R-VA-02), and Lauren Underwood (D-IL-14).

S.3707 was introduced on January 27, 2026 by Sens. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK).

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is the national voice for academic nursing representing more than 890 member schools throughout the country.

AACN member schools educate more than 570,000 students and employ more than 58,000 faculty.

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Request: Cosponsor and Pass the Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act (H.R.7279/S.3707)

The **Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act (H.R.7279/S.3707)** is a bipartisan bill that helps address the pay gap between clinical and faculty positions. Schools of nursing would need to submit data on average faculty salaries and recent clinical salaries. Grants would then be awarded based on the difference between these two averages, with the commitment by the school of nursing to maintain the salary level for new faculty.

The Scope of the Nurse Faculty Shortage

Nursing schools across the country are facing an ongoing faculty shortage, a primary obstacle to expanding the nation's nursing workforce and meeting healthcare demand. According to a recent AACN faculty survey:¹

1,588

Vacant nurse faculty roles exist across 863 institutions as of 2025.

7.2%

Is the overall vacancy rate, while the vacancy rate for schools reporting vacancies was 9.6%.

33.7%

Of institutions cited noncompetitive salaries as a barrier to faculty recruitment.

49%

Of these vacancies required a doctorate degree, while 32% preferred a doctorate, and 18% required a master's degree.

Factors Contributing to the Nurse Faculty Shortage

- **Faculty age continues to climb**, with the average age of master's and doctorally prepared nurse faculty ranging between 47 to 61 years.²
- **There is higher compensation in clinical and private-sector settings**, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics finds the median salary across advanced practice registered nurse roles is \$132,050.³ By contrast, the median salary for master's-prepared professors in schools of nursing is \$93,958.⁴

Supporting and developing nurse faculty is imperative for the education of nurses and the sustained growth of the nation's nursing workforce now and into the future.

1. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2025). Survey on Vacant Faculty Positions for Academic Year 2025-2026. Retrieved from: <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/0/PDFs/Reports/Faculty-Vacancy-Report-2025.pdf>

2. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2024). Fact Sheet: Nursing Faculty Shortage. Retrieved from: <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/0/PDFs/Fact-Sheets/Faculty-Shortage-Factsheet.pdf>

3. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2025). Occupational Outlook Handbook- Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Midwives, and Nurse Practitioners. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/nurse-anesthetists-nurse-midwives-and-nurse-practitioners.htm#tab-1>

4. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2024). Fact Sheet: Nursing Faculty Shortage. Retrieved from: <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/0/PDFs/Fact-Sheets/Faculty-Shortage-Factsheet.pdf>