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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6286**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rivers, Cleveland, Dhingra, Dozier, Nobles, Padden, Robinson, Wellman, and L. Wilson)

AN ACT Relating to addressing the anesthesia workforce shortage by reducing barriers and expanding educational opportunities to increase the supply of certified registered nurse anesthetists in Washington; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The health care system faces increasing costs and workforce shortages. Health care facilities are facing a shortage of anesthesia providers. The legislature recognizes certified registered nurse anesthetists as essential providers of safe, cost-effective, and accessible anesthesia care for Washington residents. It is the intent of the legislature to encourage an ongoing supply and improve the pipeline of certified registered nurse anesthetists in Washington state through educational promotion and expansion.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Subject to amounts appropriated specifically for this purpose, the Washington state board of nursing shall develop and manage a grant process for the purposes of providing incentives to certified registered nurse anesthetists to precept nurse anesthesia residents in health care settings. The board of nursing shall ensure the funds in the grant process are distributed equally among the total qualified applicant preceptors that dedicate at least 80 hours per year to precepting any nurse anesthesia residents. The goal of the grant program is to create more clinical placements for nurse anesthesia residents to complete required clinical hours to earn their degree and related licensure.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The University of Washington institute for health metrics and evaluation, in collaboration with the Washington state board of nursing, the Washington medical commission, and the department of health, shall study the workforce shortages in anesthesia care in each facility providing anesthesia services in Washington state, and shall submit an initial report to the legislature beginning June 30, 2025, with an update report annually thereafter. The institute for health metrics and evaluation shall submit a final report due June 30, 2029, detailing the progress made in the previous five years and any findings and policy recommendations to further address the workforce shortages and barriers to further expanding education of certified registered nurse anesthetists. The initial and each subsequent report shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Identifying the factors and barriers to entry into the profession of nurse anesthesiology;

(b) Evaluating and assessing the current training and pipeline for certified registered nurse anesthetists;

(c) Developing recommendations that reduce barriers for individuals who want to become certified registered nurse anesthetists and increasing the available clinical training slots for nurse anesthesia residents;

(d) Creating and maintaining an implementation plan to improve the pipeline of certified registered nurse anesthetists in the state;

(e) Identifying the number of qualified anesthesia providers, including, at a minimum, physician anesthesiologists and certified registered nurse anesthetists, who may practice independently in the state of Washington at each facility providing anesthesia services; and

(f) Providing policy recommendations to expand the nurse anesthesia workforce and optimize the cost of providing anesthesia services, including initiatives for all practicing independent anesthesia providers to practice at the top of their license.

(2) This section expires June 30, 2030.

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