

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5904

As Passed Senate, February 4, 2026

Title: An act relating to the use of nursing titles.

Brief Description: Concerning the use of nursing titles.

Sponsors: Senators Bateman, Holy, Chapman, Nobles, Riccelli, Saldaña and Shewmake.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/16/26, 1/20/26 [DP].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 2/4/26, 49-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes that nursing titles may only be held or used by a licensed human person.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Cleveland, Chair; Orwall, Vice Chair; Slatter, Vice Chair; Muzzall, Ranking Member; Bateman, Chapman, Christian, Harris, Holy, Riccelli and Robinson.

Staff: Jacob Ewing (786-7402)

Background: In order to practice nursing in the state of Washington, a person must be licensed by the Department of Health (DOH) or hold a valid multistate license.

A person can be licensed by DOH as a:

- registered nurse;
- advanced registered nurse practitioner; or
- licensed practical nurse.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Under state law, it is unlawful for a person who is not licensed by DOH or who does not hold a valid multistate license to practice nursing, offer to practice as a nurse, or use the title or abbreviations of a nurse to indicate that they are a nurse.

Summary of Bill: It is unlawful for a person to practice as a registered nurse, advanced registered nurse practitioner, advanced practice registered nurse, or licensed practical nurse unless that human person is licensed by DOH or holds a valid multistate license.

The title of nurse, registered nurse, advanced registered nurse practitioner, advanced practice registered nurse, nurse practitioner, and licensed practical nurse and the abbreviations R.N., A.R.N.P., A.N.R.P., N.P., and L.P.N. may only be held or used by a licensed human person.

No other person or nonhuman entity may use the titles nurse, registered nurse, advanced registered nurse practitioner, advanced practice registered nurse, nurse practitioner, or licensed practical nurse or any abbreviations, words, signs, or figures associated with those titles to indicate the person or nonhuman entity hold those titles.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Medical professionals are seeing firsthand the promise and risk of the rapid rise in AI use in healthcare. Patients are increasingly consulting AI-driven tools often without a full understanding of the context, limitations, or clinical applicability of the information they receive from those tools. As the use of AI in healthcare grows, so does the need to put guardrails on it, ensuring transparency and care for patients. People need and deserve to know exactly who or what they are getting their healthcare advice from. Nursing is fundamentally relational and requires ethical judgment that could not be safely or ethically automated.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jessica Bateman, Prime Sponsor; Justin Gill, Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA); Delores Prescott, SEIU Healthcare 1199NW; Jessica Hauffe, Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA).

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.