

To: Representative Jim Morrison, Chairman
House and Human Services Committee

From: Mary Blubaugh, MSN, RN
Executive Administrator
Kansas State Board of Nursing

Re: HB 2813

Date: March 2, 2006

Good Afternoon Chairman Morrison and Members of the House and Human Services Committee. My name is Mary Blubaugh, Executive Administrator of the Kansas State Board of Nursing. I am providing testimony on behalf of the Board Members to provide support of HB 2813 which would eliminate the practice of nursing by graduates pending the results of the first licensure examination.

The mission of the Board of Nursing is to assure the citizens of Kansas safe and competent practice by nurses. The NCLEX pass rate for professional nursing (RN) programs for the state of Kansas in 2005 was 85.41%. The national average for 2005 was 87.29%. The NCLEX pass rate for practical nursing programs for the state of Kansas in 2005 was 94.55%. The national passage rate for practical nursing (PN) programs in 2005 was 89.06%. The pass rates for Kansas and the nation for the last several years are available on KSBN web site at <http://www.ksbn.org/cne/multiyearpassrates.htm> (2005 rates will be displayed on the web sited after the March 7-8 Board of Nursing Meeting). These statistics show that 15% of graduate professional nurses may have practiced for up to 120 days without the minimum knowledge and skills to be licensed in Kansas.

In the past, graduate nurses did not receive the results of the NCLEX for 1 to 2 weeks after taking the examination. Since the testing vendor for NCLEX has changed, KSBN has the results within one business day (usually within 2 hours) after the exam is taken. KSBN mails the results the same day the graduate nurse takes the test, or the next business day, eliminating the 1 to 2 weeks delay in receiving the test results

Elimination of graduate status may encourage graduates to test early. Both Kansas and national data reveal a higher pass rate for graduates who take NCLEX within 60 days of graduation.

A review of the National Council States Board of Nursing *Profile of Member Boards 2002* revealed that 22 boards of nursing do not allow graduates to practice until they have passed NCLEX. Two neighboring states, Nebraska and Okalahoma, do not allow the practice of nursing by graduates.

KSBN requests this bill be amended with the effective date of December 1, 2006. This date will allow time for notification to education programs, current students, and prospective employers.

We ask for favorable action on this legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration and I will stand for questions.