Chapter No. 20560
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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 92

Originated in House Don Richardson Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 92

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE MISSISSIPPI NURSES ASSOCIATION ON THE CELEBRATION OF ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY.

WHEREAS, on June 7, 1911, a group of ten nurses met at the Natchez Charity Hospital to establish a State Organization of Graduate Nurses whose purpose was defined as follows: "The object of this association shall be the advancement and regulation of the educational standards of nursing; the furtherance of the efficient care of the sick; the maintenance of the honor and character of the nursing profession; the promotion of cordial relations between the graduate nurses of Mississippi and nurses of other States and Countries; also to secure legal enactments regulating professional nursing."; and

WHEREAS, one of the first major initiatives by the new professional association came in 1912 when members of the association went to Vicksburg to speak out against a bill introduced by a Warren County legislator which would prohibit white nurses from caring for Negro patients in the Mississippi hospitals; the bill passed the House, but these nurses kept the bill from going to the Senate, thereby giving nurses the right to treat all patients; and

WHEREAS, in April 1914, membership in the national organization, the American Nurses Association, was granted to the Mississippi Nurses Association (also known as the "MNA"); and

WHEREAS, the new association recognized the importance of regulation of the profession and began working toward legislation to establish a Board of Nurse Examiners: the bill passed the

House of Representatives 73-13 and went to the Senate, where it passed on March 11, 1914, thus establishing the initial Mississippi State Board of Nursing; and

WHEREAS, the 1917 MNA convention found the United States at war with Germany, and Mississippi nurses were encouraged to enroll in the American Red Cross which constituted the Army Nurse Corps; taking to heart Florence Nightingale's admonishment that "to stand still is to have gone back," Mississippi nurses forged ahead with clinical training to better their skills and tackle leading health problems like tuberculosis, treatment of syphilis, and midwifery; and

WHEREAS, many of the early MNA members served as pioneers in public health nursing and were significant health care providers during the devastating flood of 1927 on the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, the October 1929 crash of the stock market and start of the Great Depression made bad conditions in Mississippi only worse, and by 1930, more than 61 percent of all farms were mortgaged and the per capita income was $132.00: patients could not pay bills, hospitals had their economic woes and the institutions struggled to provide care at a time when tuberculosis, malaria, influenza and heart disease were endemic as the health department noted the increase of chronic disease; and

WHEREAS, amidst debates of how to provide health care under these challenging circumstances, physicians, hospital superintendents and nurses formed the Mississippi Hospital Association in 1931; and

WHEREAS, in 1939, when 28 years old, the "Mississippi State Nurses Association" became the official name of the association, and at the annual convention that year, there was a motion that the association go on record in favor of accepting black nurses as members, possibly one of the first professional associations to do so: eight years later, the first African-American nurse became a member of the association; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, as well as during the Korean conflict, Vietnam and the Gulf Wars, Mississippi nurses answered the call for an increased number of RNs for military and civilian populations, and the MNA continues to this day to have members serve their country both here and in foreign lands; and

WHEREAS, during the period from 1946 to 1970, in response to major changes in the health care system with the passage of federal legislation authorizing Medicare and Medicaid, the Mississippi Nurses Association stepped to the forefront in promoting higher education for nurses who, due to these new programs that expanded the provision of health care and the need for facilities and personnel, would be required to see an increase in patients; and

WHEREAS, since physicians were unable to provide required services to the increased number of patients, the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare allocated funds to support programs for training nurse practitioners, and the first nurse practitioner program in Mississippi was at the Mississippi University for Women; and

WHEREAS, in 1970, the Mississippi Legislature passed a law amending the Nurse Practice Act to recognize the role of the nurse practitioner and granting nurse practitioners the right to assess, diagnose and prescribe; and

WHEREAS, an early sign of the postwar growth of nursing and its professional association was seen in the purchase of the association's first headquarters in December 1948 at 703 North State Street, followed by a move in 1966 to a larger and more modern facility at 135 Bounds Street, where the association was housed until its move to the Mississippi Center for Nursing, a facility owned by the Foundation on four acres of land in Madison, Mississippi, which facility is the home for the Mississippi Nurses Association and the MNA-PAC formed in 1984; and

WHEREAS, at the 2010 convention in Biloxi, the association held a "mortgage burning" to signify that the building was now debt-free; and

WHEREAS, a leader in providing continuing education to nurses, the MNA achieved accreditation by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, a division of the American Nurses Association, and currently is accredited, along with the Foundation, by the center as a provider of continuing education, thereby allowing thousands of hours of continuing education to be provided yearly through the association; and

WHEREAS, throughout its 100-year existence, the MNA has continued to be active in the political arena, maintaining a strong lobbying contingent involving hundreds of nurses, and has worked closely with the Mississippi Legislature on numerous matters, more recently including: creating the Mississippi Office of Nursing Workforce; establishing scholarship funding for nursing education and a stipend to encourage nurses to become nurse educators; providing funding to increase enrollment in the nurse practitioner programs at the University of Mississippi School of Nursing, University of Southern Mississippi School of Nursing and Mississippi University for Women School of Nursing, while adding two new programs at Alcorn University School of Nursing and Delta State University School of Nursing; and securing state funding for an unprecedented $12,000.00 pay raise for nursing faculty over a two-year period, which was a major factor in stabilizing the workforce deficit in the state; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, the Mississippi Legislature created the specialty nursing car tag that established a steady stream of revenue for the Foundation for the purpose of funding nursing scholarships; and

WHEREAS, after that fateful day on August 29, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina battered the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the Mississippi Nurses Association and Foundation were instrumental in

leading efforts to assist nurses in their greatest time of need: as individual nurses from across the country converged on the Coast to provide health care to the thousands who were in desperate need, the MNA staff and nursing volunteers made numerous trips to the Coast with supplies for nurses while the American Nurses Foundation and other nursing organizations provided funding through the MNA to help; and

WHEREAS, first to document the accounts of nurses who endured the ordeals of the storm, the MNA used money from the MNA Relief Fund to pay licensure fees for those nurses affected by Katrina and their registration fees for the convention where their stories were told, while Johnson and Johnson, along with the MNA, hosted its "Promise of Nursing" in Biloxi to raise money for mental health workshops for nurses; and

WHEREAS, since its birth, the Mississippi Nurses Association has helped shape nursing education and nursing practice and has a proud legacy both locally and nationally as a leader; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Nurses Association, often thought of as a mirror reflecting the issues of this state and nation, serves as the spokesperson for the 39,000-plus registered nurses and the 2,300 nurse practitioners and undertakes a variety of activities on behalf of nursing, including: promoting continued education for RNs; supporting strong nursing education programs; recognizing the nurses of this state every year during the Nightingale Awards dinner; and meeting yearly in an annual convention where there are valuable discussions about providing adequate health care to their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, while many of the MNA members have been recognized nationally for their leadership roles in the profession, there are thousands of registered nurses in this state today who provide health care in various settings, including schools, hospitals, home health, clinics, public health and businesses, and every year a special week in May is proclaimed National Nurses Week; and

WHEREAS, on June 10-11, 2011, nurses will converge on Natchez, Mississippi, the original site of the Mississippi Nursing Association's humble beginnings, to celebrate 100 years of service to this state and the many accomplishments of this great association; and

WHEREAS, to commemorate the service of the association and its members, a book on the history of the Mississippi Nurses Association, A Way to Serve: The Mississippi Nurses Association 1911-2011, has been written by Seetha Srinivasan; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature that recognition be given to an organization in the State of Mississippi which, for 100 years, has continuously worked to better the honorable profession of nursing and to support the countless individual nurses who untiringly bring aid, comfort and healing to their fellows in their time of need:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate the Mississippi Nurses Association on the occasion of its 100th Anniversary celebration and extend best wishes to the membership of the association on this auspicious occasion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to the Mississippi Nurses Association, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
March 5, 2011

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
March 9, 2011

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE