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Summary of Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County

Issue

What steps can be taken to alleviate the nursing shortage in San Mateo County?

Summary

The 2005-2006 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) interviewed more than 20 people concerned with the nursing shortage. These included educators, health care professionals, and government policymakers. Its investigation focused on three aspects of the lack of nurses: training, retention, and recruitment.

The seriousness of the nursing shortage is addressed in a bill currently making its way through the California State legislature. SB1309 states:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that California is facing a health care crisis of immense proportion in major part due to a critical shortage of registered nurses. California currently ranks 49th among states in nurses per capita. This shortage is expected to increase over the next five years due to the aging of both the general population and of the nursing workforce. It is estimated that, in order to fill the projected shortage, California will need to graduate an additional 3,300 nurses a year.

Locally, one informed projection estimates that the Greater Silicon Valley will need 391 more new nurses per year than are currently being trained.

San Mateo County can expect an increased need for nurses, especially for the elderly and the young. On the one hand, the population is ageing. On the other, school children manifest new health problems -- childhood diabetes, diseases introduced from other countries, obesity, and the public-school enrollment of children with serious physical and emotional problems. A complicating factor in San Mateo County is expensive housing

and high living costs, which discourage nurses and other health care professionals from settling in the County.

The Grand Jury concludes that because the local nursing shortage is a community problem, solving it requires a community solution. Individual colleges, health care districts, and the Medical Center cannot resolve the problem alone. It will take concerted, cooperative efforts among County agencies; between public, private, and corporate bodies; and throughout the region.



Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County

Issue

What steps can be taken to alleviate the nursing shortage in San Mateo County.

Background

San Mateo County, the State of California, and the nation are facing a health care crisis. *Newsweek* magazine recently published an article indicating that 30 states have nursing shortages.

The seriousness of the nursing shortage is addressed in a bill currently making its way through the California State legislature. (The appendix to this report gives the text of SB1309.) SB1309 states:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that California is facing a health care crisis of immense proportion in major part due to a critical shortage of registered nurses. California currently ranks 49th among states in nurses per capita. This shortage is expected to increase over the next five years due to the aging of both the general population and of the nursing workforce. It is estimated that, in order to fill the projected shortage, California will need to graduate an additional 3,300 nurses a year.

In the near future the lack of nurses will have a negative impact on the local health care system. One informed projection¹ estimates that Greater Silicon Valley will need 391 more new nurses per year than are currently being trained...

San Mateo County can expect an increased need for nurses, especially for the elderly and the young, as its demographics change. On the one hand, the population is aging. On the other, school children manifest new health problems -- childhood diabetes, diseases introduced from other countries, obesity, and the public-school enrollment of children with serious physical and emotional problems. A complicating factor in San Mateo

¹ *Silicon Valley Center for the Health Professions Business Plan*, p. 1.

County is expensive housing and high living costs, which discourage nurses and other health care professionals from settling in the County.

Competition to enroll in a school of nursing in the Bay Area has become extremely intense. Despite the growing pool of qualified applicants, nursing schools lack the faculty and the clinical facilities to train them.

Investigation

The 2005-2006 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) interviewed more than 20 people concerned with the nursing shortage. These included educators, health care professionals, and government policymakers. Its investigation focused on three aspects of the lack of nurses: training, recruitment, and retention.

Findings I: Supply and Demand

The Grand Jury found that, despite considerable interest in nursing as a profession and many job openings for nurses, the nursing shortage persists.

- The need for nurses in California and San Mateo County is immediate.
 - San Mateo County Medical Center is currently short approximately 15% of its optimum nursing staff.
 - Area hospitals have been forced to recruit nurses from abroad, seeking nurses from India, the Philippines, Korea, England, and Canada.

Hospitals must supplement their regular staff with non-union per-diem nurses and traveling nurses found through registries. Either way, such nurses are expensive and make no long-term commitment to stay in the County.

- Currently there are 700 prospective students waiting to enroll in nurses training in the area, approximately 330 of them vying for the 100 slots at the College of San Mateo and Canada College.
 - The College of San Mateo has 180 qualified applicants a year for its Associate in Science (AS) degree program in nursing. It can admit only 60 each year into its two-year program.
 - The Canada College Nursing Program, which offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree through San Francisco State University, has space only for a total of 40 students each year.²

² The combined SFSU and Canada College program is so competitive that it accepts only 12% of the applicants.

- Despite the need for nurses and the eagerness of students to train as nurses, there is a gap between the demand for and the supply of trained nurses. There are three major reasons for this bottleneck in nursing education:
 - Inadequate funding by the state

California pays approximately \$4,000 a year (\$8,000 for a two-year program) per full-time community college student, with its funding model based on an average of 35 students per class. The two-year education of a nursing student, however, costs approximately \$30,000 per student, partly because nursing classes are limited to 12 students per clinical class (the maximum allowed by the Board of Registered Nurses, which regulates nursing programs in the state).
 - Few qualified faculty willing to accept low pay

At the College of San Mateo, fulltime nursing instructors earn between \$60,000 and \$80,000 per year and adjuncts (part-time faculty) earn \$52.68 per hour. Nurses working in private practice or in a hospital setting could be earning \$80,000 to \$100,000 per year. Many nursing faculty are forced to take other jobs to live. The problem is further complicated because the teachers' union, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), does not allow differential pay for teachers in high-demand programs.

The College of San Mateo has had a fulltime position open for two years. Despite aggressive advertising, it has had few applicants and no success in filling the slot.

The problem is compounded because part-time employees are limited by law in the amount of time they can work. SB1309, the Scott Bill, currently before the Senate Appropriations Committee specifically addresses this problem:

(6) Existing law authorizes the governing board of a community college district to employ any qualified individual as a temporary faculty member for a complete school year, but prohibits the employment of a person under this provision for more than 2 semesters or 3 quarters within any period of 3 consecutive years.

This bill would exempt persons serving as clinical nursing faculty from this limit, and instead limit these persons to employment under this provision for up to 4 semesters or 6 quarters within any period of 3 consecutive academic years between July 1, 2007, and June 30, 2014.

- Lack of facilities for clinical training

It is difficult to place students for clinical training in San Mateo County, particularly in community health, psychiatric mental health (Sequoia Hospital can take only one student), and pediatric health.
- Furthermore, the retention of nurses is particularly difficult because of the high cost of living in San Mateo County. The San Mateo County Medical Center, Sequoia Hospital, and Mills-Peninsula Hospital all have strategies for persuading their employees to stay. These include providing opportunities for

nurses to move into fresh areas of nursing within the hospital; encouraging them to train in new specialties, such as obesity; and supporting nurses with AS degrees as they continue their education to obtain BSN degrees. In addition to such professional development, hospitals have other programs to retain nurses, which are discussed below in Findings II.

Findings II: Creative Approaches to the Problem

The Grand Jury found that community colleges, health care districts, hospitals, and foundations have devised several commendable strategies for alleviating the local nursing shortage.

- Committing \$1 million dollars a year for ten years, the Sequoia Healthcare District (SHCD) has funded a unique baccalaureate degree program in nursing at Canada College. This innovative program allowed San Francisco State University (SFSU) to expand its overcrowded nursing program into new facilities at Canada College. Students at Canada College take their first two years of course work at Canada and then, if qualified and accepted into the nursing program, are enrolled as students of San Francisco State University. The content of SFSU's two nursing programs – one at SFSU and one at Canada -- is identical. SFSU students take 30 months to complete the last two years of their course work; Canada students, however, accelerate to 21 months of more intensive schooling. Classes are taught at Canada; professors are provided by SFSU; clinical training is provided off site. A graduate receives a BSN degree from SFSU and is prepared to pass Board examinations.

In addition to funding the Canada College/SFSU BS in Nursing program, SHCD awards the Dr. William Kennett Memorial Nursing Scholarship (the first recipient is Aaron Eigenman, a student nurse who served with the Air National Guard in Turkey) and offers forgivable loans to nursing graduates who work at Sequoia Hospital for two years.

- Peninsula Health Care District has committed a total of \$224,450 for 2005-2007 to fund nursing education at the College of San Mateo (CSM). This amount will support 12 students for two years and will allow CSM to maintain the number of its entering students at 60 each year. The funds are used to pay two fulltime clinical instructors for two academic years (salary and benefits approximately \$200,000) and to cover the wages and benefits for hourly instructors in skills development and nursing career courses, as well as Nursing Lab staff (\$24,450). In an effort to attract and retain health care professionals, Peninsula Health Care District currently helps doctors obtain loans for housing.
- Mills-Peninsula Hospital is actively promoting and financing nursing education, particularly for current employees, with scholarships; forgivable loans; and flexible and reduced hours, which allow employees to keep their benefits as they

pursue further education. Scholarships from the hospital auxiliary are available not only to employees but to others studying health care.

- San Mateo Medical Center aggressively recruits and provides such incentives for nurses as a finder's fee of \$500; relocation money of up to \$2,500, in exchange for a commitment to remain with the Medical Center for 18 months; and a 15% rental discount at selected apartment complexes. In December 2005, four nurses were living in discounted units at Westlake Village Apartments.

The Medical Center runs radio spots and posts nursing jobs on Internet job sites. Seventeen nurses had been hired by December 2005 off Monster.com and Medhunters.com. As a result of the County Medical Center's concentrated recruitment efforts, the vacancy rate for staff nurses for the Medical Center and County clinics decreased from 19.1% in January 2005 (39 nursing vacancies) to 15.8% in December 2005.

The Medical Center participates in the Integrated Nurse Leadership Program, funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, which encourages staff nurses at unit level to make decisions that affect the health of patients. This additional challenge and responsibility attracts and retains strong professionals.

- In addition to coordination within the County, such as that between health care districts and community hospitals, there has been innovative partnering beyond the County itself. These include tapping the resources of foundations and private organizations, as well as regional cooperation.
 - The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation has been particularly generous, committing \$120 million to health care in the area. In addition to the Integrated Nurse Leadership Program discussed above, the Moore Foundation is paying San Jose State University to educate nursing instructors. It has also sent a letter of intent confirming its investment in the South Bay Regional Simulation Lab designed to be part of the proposed Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions (SVCHP), which is described in the paragraphs below. The Simulation Lab could provide space for 25% of clinical training for nurses. Such a simulation lab provides an economical, efficient, and effective method of in-depth, quality clinical experience.
 - Regional planning has extended not only north to San Francisco State University but south to Santa Clara County with the proposed Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions (SVCHP). The San Mateo Workforce Investment Board, in conjunction with its counterpart in Santa Clara County, has led a coalition of leaders in the Greater Silicon Valley. Community colleges; San Jose State University; and the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California, representing 18 hospitals throughout both counties, are joining forces to create the Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions.

The SVCHP proposal attempts to remedy the nursing shortage by offering and funding nursing education through fee-based contract education rather than through state funding. In this model, hospitals and health care districts contract with community college districts for nursing education to provide a source of badly needed nurses. An employer decides how many nurses it needs and funds those students in one of two ways: by contributing approximately \$30,000 to SVCHP for each student for the 18-month program or by providing forgivable scholarships to students who commit to nursing for the contractor after graduation. Initially, classroom teaching will be done at the community colleges and clinical training in the SVCHP Simulation Lab at the NASA Ames Research Park.

As this report goes to press, potential members are evaluating the business plan for the Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions to determine whether they will join the consortium.

- The Workforce Investment Board is exploring other partnering efforts to find solutions to the nursing shortage, including Community Outreach for Prevention and Education (COPE) Health Care Services in Southern California.

Conclusions

Despite commendable efforts by various institutions to deal with the nursing shortfall, the problem remains a major one.

The Grand Jury concludes that because the local nursing shortage is a community problem, solving it requires a community solution. Individual colleges, health care districts, and the Medical Center cannot resolve the problem alone. It will take concerted, cooperative efforts among County agencies; between public, private, and corporate bodies; and throughout the region.

Broad, comprehensive planning will prove both more economical and more enduring than such stopgap measures as employing traveling nurses and doing long distance recruiting.

Recommendations

Recognizing the need to reach out to the community to solve the nursing shortage, the Grand Jury makes the following recommendations:

1. The Grand Jury recommends that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors:
 - 1.1. Actively support SB1309, which addresses the nursing shortage and is currently being considered by the California State Legislature.
 - 1.2. Continue to fund and otherwise support the Workforce Investment Board in its ongoing effort to establish the Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions and in its exploration of other efforts to partner in finding solutions for the nursing shortage.
 - 1.3. Extend to nurses who are already employed at the San Mateo County Medical Center, and who meet certain criteria, its current recruiting strategy of offering prospective nurses rental discounts at selected apartment complexes.
2. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Trustees of the San Mateo County Community College District:
 - 2.1. Continue its support of the Chancellor and the community colleges in their ongoing effort to establish the Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions.
 - 2.2. Explore alternate avenues for supplementing the salaries of nursing faculty.
3. The Grand Jury recommends that the Peninsula Health Care District:
 - 3.1. Continue to fund nurses' training by the additional step of supplementing the salaries of nursing professors so that pay will be competitive.
 - 3.2. Take immediate steps to extend to nurses its current practice of helping doctors obtain loans for housing.
4. The Grand Jury recommends that the Sequoia Healthcare District implement a policy of helping nurses obtain loans for housing.

APPENDIX

Text of SB1309

SB1309

BILL TEXT

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 17, 2006

INTRODUCED BY Senator Scott

(*Principal coauthor: Senator Perata*)

FEBRUARY 16, 2006

An act to amend ~~Section 69616.3 of, and Sections 69433.5, 69616, 69616.1, 69616.2, 69616.3, 69616.4, 69616.5, and 87482 of,~~ to amend and renumber the heading of Article 5.6 (commencing with Section 69616) of Chapter 2 of Part 42 of, ~~the Education Code~~ to add Article 10 (commencing with Section 33430) to Chapter 3 of Part 20 of, to add Article 6.3 (commencing with Section 69439.3) to Chapter 1.7 of Part 42 of, to add Article 3.51 (commencing with Section 78260), Article 3.52 (commencing with Section 78261), and Article 3.53 (commencing with Section 78262) to Chapter 2 of Part 48 of, and to add Article 7.7 (commencing with Section 89267) to Chapter 2 of Part 55 of, the Education Code, and to add Article 5 (commencing with Section 128050) to Chapter 2 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to nursing education, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1309, as amended, Scott Nursing education: *Health Science and Medical Technology Project: Cal Grant Program: State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education: California Community Colleges.*

(1) *Existing law establishes programs of nursing education at public and private institutions of higher education.*

This bill would express legislative intent with respect to expanding the capacity of the state's institutions of higher education to prepare students for nursing careers.

(2) *Existing law establishes the State Department of Education under the administration of the State Board of Education and the*

Superintendent of Public Instruction, and provides the department with numerous duties and responsibilities with respect to statewide administration of public elementary and secondary education programs and services.

This bill would establish a Health Science and Medical Technology Project to provide competitive grant funds to California public schools offering grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to enhance existing or establish new health-related career pathway programs, including programs at California Partnership academies and regional occupational centers and programs, as well as other health science and medical technology pathway programs. The bill would express legislative intent with respect to the funding of this project.

(3) Existing law establishes the Student Aid Commission as the primary state agency for the administration of state-authorized student financial aid programs available to students attending all segments of postsecondary education.

Existing law, known as the Ortiz-Pacheco-Poochigian-Vasconcellos Cal Grant Act, establishes the Cal Grant A and B entitlement awards, the California Community College Transfer Entitlement awards, the Competitive Cal Grant A and B awards, the Cal Grant C awards, and the Cal Grant T awards under the administration of the Student Aid Commission, and establishes eligibility requirements for awards under these programs for participating students attending qualifying institutions. An existing provision of the act prohibits an applicant for a Cal Grant award from receiving more than one type of Cal Grant Program award concurrently.

This bill would provide that a Cal Grant N award consists of a one-time stipend of \$500 awarded to Cal Grant recipients who are enrolled in a program of nursing education. The bill would specify the uses to which the stipend could be used. The bill would exempt recipients of Cal Grant N awards from the provision that prohibits applicants from receiving more than one type of Cal Grant Program award concurrently.

(4) Existing law establishes the State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education (SNAPLE), administered by the commission, under which any person enrolled in an institution of postsecondary education and participating in that loan assumption program is eligible to receive a conditional warrant for loan assumption, to be redeemed upon becoming employed as a full-time nursing faculty member at a California college or university.

Among other things, the SNAPLE act establishes eligibility requirements, *including the receipt of a graduate degree from an accredited, participating institution before loan assumption payments may be made*, limits each participant in the program to one loan assumption agreement, and provides for a progressive assumption of the amount of the loan over 3 consecutive years of teaching, up to a total loan assumption of \$25,000. The SNAPLE act requires the commission to report annually to the Legislature, and states the intent of the Legislature that, commencing with the 2006-07 fiscal year, funding necessary for the

administration of the program shall be included within the annual budget of the commission.

This bill would amend the SNAPLE act to authorize the award of loan assumption agreements under the program to undergraduate students and to authorize the making of loan assumption payments to applicants who have taught on a part-time basis for the equivalent of 3 full-time academic years. The bill would authorize the extension of the term of a loan assumption agreement if a natural disaster prevents a program participant from completing one of the years of required teaching service. The bill would express the intent of the Legislature that the amendments made by the bill apply retroactively to existing loan assumption agreements made under the program, and would authorize the commission to amend any existing loan assumption agreements and to issue new loan assumption agreements to conform to this bill. The bill would also make various technical, nonsubstantive changes in the SNAPLE act.

—(2)

(5) Existing law establishes the California Community Colleges, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state. Existing law requires the board of governors to appoint a chief executive officer, known as the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges. Existing law establishes community college districts throughout the state, and authorizes these districts to provide instruction to students at the community college campuses maintained by the districts.

The bill would establish the California Community Colleges Nursing Faculty Recruitment and Retention Program for purposes of facilitating the recruitment and retention of qualified nursing faculty. The bill would express legislative intent with respect to the funding of this program.

(6) Existing law authorizes the governing board of a community college district to employ any qualified individual as a temporary faculty member for a complete school year, but prohibits the employment of a person under this provision for more than 2 semesters or 3 quarters within any period of 3 consecutive years.

This bill would exempt persons serving as clinical nursing faculty from this limit, and instead limit these persons to employment under this provision for up to 4 semesters or 6 quarters within any period of 3 consecutive academic years between July 1, 2007, and June 30, 2014. The bill would require the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to report to the Legislature and the Governor on or before September 1, 2012, on specified topics related to this provision.

(7) Existing law establishes the California State University under the administration of the Trustees of the California State University, and provides for the operation of 25 component institutions of the university.

This bill would express legislative intent with respect to the expansion and funding of baccalaureate degree nursing programs of the university.

(8) Existing law establishes the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, which is charged with the administration of health policy and planning.

This bill would provide for the establishment of a healthcare workforce clearinghouse under the administration of the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development. The bill would provide that the clearinghouse would serve as the central source of health care workforce and educational pipeline data in the state. The bill would also provide that the clearinghouse would be responsible for the collection, analysis, and distribution of information on the educational and employment trends for health care occupations in the state. The bill would specify the data to be collected under the program, and would require the office to provide an annual report to the Legislature on prescribed topics related to the clearinghouse.

(9) The bill would appropriate, without regard to fiscal years, an unspecified sum from the General Fund to the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to administer a contract entered into to develop regional computer clinical placement and clinical faculty resource center systems and to administer a matching grant program, and to allocate funds under that program to community college districts to establish or expand clinical nursing simulation laboratories, as prescribed.

To the extent the funds appropriated by this bill are allocated to a community college district, as defined by existing law for purposes of Section 8 of Article XVI of the California Constitution, those funds may be applied toward the minimum funding requirements for school districts and community college districts imposed by Section 8 of Article XVI of the California Constitution.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

Peninsula Health Care District

1783 El Camino Real, Burlingame, Ca 94010

Telephone: 650/696-5450 Fax: 650/696-5336

July 20, 2006

Honorable Stephen M. Hall
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, California 94063-1655

Re: Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County Report

Dear Judge Hall:

The Peninsula Health Care District is in receipt of the June 7, 2006 report from the 2005-2006 Grand Jury on their findings and recommendations pertaining to the Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County.

The District Board discussed both the report and its recommendations at its June 29, 2006 meeting and concurs with the findings and recommendations. The District Board has appointed a committee, chaired by Director Helen Galligan (a registered nurse), to study the issues and provide recommendations for the District's action in this matter.

The Peninsula Health Care District currently provides a Registered Nurse Loan Forgiveness Program to individuals residing within San Mateo County, and provides loans for both two-year nursing programs and 4-year bachelor programs to loan participants. The District also provides financial support to the College of San Mateo's Nursing Program, which has enabled them to increase the number of students in their nursing programs, and this has been ongoing support since 2001 and a total of \$1,127,487 has been provided to the College to-date.

The two recommendations by the Grand Jury to our District are as follows: *3.1 Continue to fund nurses' training by the additional step of supplementing salaries of nursing professors so that pay will be competitive; and 3.2 Take immediate steps to extend to nurses its current practice of helping doctors obtain loans for housing.* It should be pointed out for clarification that our District does not provide housing loans for physicians; our Physician Loan Program is designed to provide financial loans to physicians from outside the community to come into the area and start or join a medical practice within our District. These start-up loans are then forgiven once the physician has completed four years of practicing medicine within our district boundaries.

The two aforementioned recommendations by the Grand Jury have not been implemented, but will be studied under our newly formed committee with subsequent presentation to our Board for approval of any recommendations. Our committee will be in contact with the College of San Mateo Nursing Program Director to determine how our District can best assist in their issue of salaries for nursing instructors. It is our expectation to provide a definitive response to the two above recommendations by the September 5, 2006 date as you have requested.

Sincerely,

DONALD E. NEWMAN, Chair
Board of Directors



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence

County Manager's Office

DATE: July 31, 2006
BOARD MEETING DATE: August 15, 2006
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING: None
VOTE REQUIRED: None

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: John L. Maltbie, County Manager
SUBJECT: 2005-06 Grand Jury Responses

Recommendation

Accept this report containing the County's responses to the following 2005-06 Grand Jury reports: "Emancipation from Foster Care" and "Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County."

VISION ALIGNMENT:

Commitment: Responsive, effective and collaborative government.

Goal 20: Government decisions are based on careful consideration of future impact, rather than temporary relief or immediate gain.

This activity contributes to the goal by ensuring that all Grand Jury findings and recommendations are thoroughly reviewed by the appropriate County departments and that, when appropriate, process improvements are made to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided to the public and other agencies.

Discussion:

The County is mandated to respond to the Grand Jury within 90 days from the date that reports are filed with the County Clerk, and Elected Officials are mandated to respond within 60 days. It is also the County's policy to provide periodic updates to the Board and the Grand Jury on the progress of past Grand Jury recommendations requiring ongoing or further action. To that end, attached are the County's responses to the Grand Jury's reports on "Emancipation from Foster Care" issued May 25, 2006 and "Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County" issued June 7, 2006.

Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County

Findings:

Agree with the two findings which discuss innovative partnering beyond the County as noted on page seven of the report in the section entitled, "Findings II: Creative Approaches to the Problem." Those findings discuss efforts to work with the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to launch a simulation lab as part of the Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions (SVCHP). The findings also discuss the efforts to plan and launch the SVCHP facility itself. The San Mateo WIB and its partners have devoted significant effort and resources to addressing the nursing shortage in San Mateo County. This workforce partnership has generated positive outcomes and secured grant funding for initiatives such as the "Caregiver Training Initiative" and the "Nurse Workforce Initiative." These initiatives, respectively, resulted in a healthcare careers conference and creation of a healthcare career ladder directory for job seekers, and funding an expansion of the nursing program at the College of San Mateo, which graduated new students in the spring of 2005. In 2005, San Mateo partnered with the Community College Districts and the Workforce Investment Boards of San Mateo County, Santa Clara County, and the City of San Jose to create a business plan for a regional healthcare training center, known as the "Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions." That business plan also included plans for a regional simulation lab, as noted in the findings. Currently, the SVCHP project is still in the planning stages. The San Mateo Medical Center has provided representatives to participate in the planning process, and has committed its support for this project as a site for student placement.

Additionally, the San Mateo WIB and the San Mateo Medical Center have worked closely together over the past two years. Staff from the two organizations have been meeting since December 2004 to share information about critical workforce needs at the Medical Center and to outline potential strategies for addressing those needs.

Do not disagree with the additional findings in the report; however, there is insufficient knowledge to verify whether the statements are factual regarding the actions of other entities, such as the Sequoia Healthcare District.

Recommendations:

- 1. The Grand Jury recommends that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors:**
 - 1.1 Actively support SB1309, which addresses the nursing shortage and is currently being considered by the California State Legislature.**

Response: Agree. The Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 068127 in support of SB1309 at their July 11, 2006 meeting.

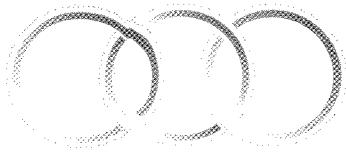
- 1.2 Continue to fund and otherwise support the Workforce Investment Board in its ongoing effort to establish the Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions and in its exploration of other efforts to**

partner in finding solutions for the nursing shortage.

Response: Agree. This recommendation has already been implemented and is ongoing. The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors supports the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and its efforts. The WIB will continue to seek funding and solutions for this critical growth sector of nursing.

1.3 Extend to nurses who are already employed at the San Mateo Medical Center, and who meet certain criteria, its current recruiting strategy of offering prospective nurses rental discounts at selected apartment complexes.

Response: Agree. The discounts at Westlake Village Apartments in Daly City and Hillside Gardens in San Mateo are available to current nursing staff as well as prospective nurse recruits. All new nurses at the Medical Center are made aware of the rental discounts and the discounts are advertised once a year in the San Mateo Medical Center newsletter which is distributed to all Medical Center staff.



SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Office of the Chancellor

August 17, 2006

The Honorable Stephen M. Hall
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

AGENCY RESPONSE TO REPORT ON THE NURSING SHORTAGE IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

We have reviewed the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury's Report on the Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County and have the following responses to the recommendations presented in the report:

(From page 9 of the Nursing Report)

The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Trustees of the San Mateo County Community College District:

2.1. Continue its support of the Chancellor and the community colleges in their ongoing effort to establish the Silicon Valley Center for Health Professions. *The respondent agrees with this recommendation; however, the current revenue sources available for community colleges will not permit the colleges alone to establish this Center. The San Mateo County Community College District and other College Districts interested in this Center will continue to pursue alternative means of funding this Center.*

As mentioned in the Grand Jury Report, the College District is working with the Sequoia Healthcare District and San Francisco State University to provide a unique baccalaureate degree program in nursing at Canada College. The College District has also partnered for many years with the Peninsula Health Care District to provide expanded nursing education programs at College of San Mateo; currently that program is serving 60 students each year.

2.2. Explore alternate avenues for supplementing the salaries of nursing faculty. *The respondent appreciates the fact that the Grand Jury recognizes the challenges involved in recruiting nursing faculty members; however, the San Mateo County Community College District is experiencing recruiting challenges in many other disciplines. The high cost of housing the area contributes to the challenge of recruiting and retaining top-notch faculty. We have undertaken a two-pronged approach to addressing this issue: 1) the*

*Board of Trustees and administration is committed to raising the salaries of **all** faculty members and recently proposed a generous three-year wage settlement to our collective bargaining units; and 2) the College District will continue its various programs to assist faculty and staff with housing needs through continued operation and possible expansion of the College Vista residential community and provision of very attractive second loans to faculty and staff who are purchasing a home in the area.*

Although two other recommendations in the Grand Jury Report (that the Peninsula and Sequoia Healthcare Districts either establish or extend home loan programs for nurses) was not directed at the San Mateo County Community College District, we do have experience managing successful second loan programs for our employees, in conjunction with Meriwest Credit Union and other community partners. We would be happy to share our program structure and experiences with the staff of the Healthcare Agencies

Sincerely,

Dave Mandelkern
President, Board of Trustees



**Sequoia
Healthcare
District**

170 Alameda de las Pulgas
Redwood City, CA 94062

650-367-5708 Phone
650-482-6056 Fax

www.sequoiahealthcaredistrict.com

August 24, 2006

**Honorable Stephen M. Hall
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655**

Subject: Response to the 2005-2006 Civil Grand Jury Report: Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County

Honorable Judge Hall:

Sequoia Healthcare District submits the attached response to the recommendations made to Sequoia Healthcare District by the 2005-2006 Civil Grand Jury.

Sincerely,

Stephani Scott, CEO

Kathleen Kane, Board President

Response To 2005-2006 Civil Grand Jury Report: Nursing Shortage in San Mateo County

Sequoia Healthcare District is grateful to the 2005-2006 Grand Jury for their attention to the important issue of the nursing shortage in San Mateo County and for describing the baccalaureate degree program in nursing at Cañada College funded by Sequoia Healthcare District as a commendable strategy for alleviating the local nursing shortage.

Per the instruction to respond to findings filed by the 2005-2006 Grand Jury, Sequoia Healthcare District agrees with the information under the subheading entitled "Findings" in the report. One clarification is necessary as the report states that Sequoia Healthcare District awards the Dr. William Kennett Memorial Nursing Scholarship and offers forgivable loans to nursing graduates who work at Sequoia Hospital. It is Sequoia Hospital Foundation that awards the Dr. William Kennett Memorial Nursing Scholarship to exceptional students enrolled in the program and Sequoia Hospital that offers forgivable loans to students who accept an offer to work at Sequoia Hospital upon graduation.

Per the instruction to respond to each recommendation:

The Grand Jury recommends that the Sequoia Healthcare District implement a policy of helping nurses obtain loans for housing.

While we cannot provide housing ourselves under the Health and Safety Code statute governing health care districts, the challenge of attracting basic service providers (nurses, teachers, other professionals, etc.) due to the high cost of living has been an ongoing topic among various countywide groups and staff will continue to promote such discussion.