

Communication from Public

Name:

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Comments for Public Posting: While it is very important to ensure that patient care is always at the forefront of staffing decisions, this motion is out of place. The City Council knows little about staffing levels at hospitals and of the financial situation many hospitals currently face as a result of federal budget cuts. Furthermore, California has very strict patient ratios for registered nurses which prohibits nurses from taking on additional patients -- even when they have the time to do so. The patient ratios were established well before computerized records were introduced and operationalized. In some settings, this has resulted in a reduction of work for the nurses on the floor and even in the Emergency Room. However, the ratios still hold as first adopted -- a holy grail of sorts. The union is strong and no legislators are willing to reevaluate those ratios. The Council File motion is a tribute to the strength of the nurses' union. If the City truly wishes to see an improvement in the delivery of health care in Los Angeles, there are many things that could be done. Addressing the need to have new training programs for future nurses is the most obvious one. Focusing on PREVENTION so that Angelenos have good sources of affordable fresh foods (fruits and veggies), adding more open space in the form of parkland so that Angelenos can get out and exercise, making certain that toxic exposures are reduced in communities. Getting involved in labor disputes is not what the City Council needs to be doing. One would think that you have more important issues than to introduce and consider such motions that are ceremonial in nature and superficial in intent. Focus on what counts and will make a difference.