

State of Connecticut  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING HARTFORD,  
CT 06106-1591

Task Force to Study Methods to Address the Shortage of Radiologic Technologists,  
Nuclear Medicine Technologists and Respiratory Care Practitioners in the State

Meeting Summary

Thursday, December 12, 2024

10:30 AM on Zoom and YouTube Live

I. Convene Meeting and Review of the Charge

- Bernadette Mele convened the meeting at 10:33 PM.
- Attendance: Bernadette Mele, Matthew Green, Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey, Sajjad Raza, Adam Kaye, and Karen Griffiths
- Guests: Kat Hall

II. Reports and Discussion

- Bernadette Mele summarized the agenda for the meeting. She asked members if they had the opportunity to go through the first section of the draft final report.
- Karen Griffiths thanked Bernadette Mele and answered that she didn't have sufficient time to go through the report. She believes that the parts she went through need some word smithing but the gist of it was good. She suggested that they add language regarding national Respiratory Care vacancy rates or for discussion of national vacancy rates be put into the background. She added that the subgroup could meet one more time to revise the final draft.

She wants the final report to be consistent throughout the document.

- Bernadette Mele stated that she noticed that as well and commented that she believes that it should go under the section titled executive summary, but she is open to putting it somewhere else.
- Karen Griffiths stated that they can put in one more line to make it consistent.
- Bernadette Mele went through the sections that outlined their main findings, overarching principles, and the Task Forces recommendations. She asked members if they see a format error in the document.
- Karen Griffiths answered that there could be a possible format error, but the substance looks the same.
- Bernadette Mele moved on to the section titled introductions that contain the creation and charge of the Task Force, the approach of the Task Force, background information on the modalities, and the report contents. She asked members if they have any comments regarding background information on respiratory care therapists. She then moved onto the section titled scope of problem which contains the impact of the shortage. She asked members what they think of regarding the conciseness of the report.
- Sajjad Raza stated that he doesn't have a copy of the draft, but that it looks good.
- Bernadette Mele moved on to the section titled Guiding Principles which contains the overarching principles. She moved on to the section titled Connecticut's current system which explains the different programs for the modalities.
- Karen Griffiths stated that she would like the respiratory care programs to be expanded to remain consistent.
- Bernadette Mele answered that the additional information is in the Respiratory Care background information section. She asked Karen Griffiths if she would like that information to be added here as she doesn't want the report to sound repetitive.
- Karen Griffiths stated that having that information in background is fine and she doesn't want information to be overlooked by readers. She would prefer having one more line regarding educational pathways and possibly the credentialing requirements.
- Sajjad Raza agrees with Karen Griffiths.

- Bernadette Mele asked if the credentialing requirements are within the background information section of the report.
- Karen Griffiths doesn't believe that the credentialing requirements are within the background information section and believes that it would be helpful to include a summary of this information. She stated that she could write the language and share it. She shared information that contained completion rates and job placement rates for respiratory care therapists and stated that she can share that information to be put into the report.
- Bernadette Mele stated that she can put that information into the report.
- Karen Griffiths added that she can write language regarding credentialing and educational pathways.
- Bernadette Mele stated that they have a tight timeline and isn't sure if they are able to get another meeting to vote on the report, so she is mindful of that. She commented that members could decide at the end on how they would move forward with the report. She continued the section which contained continued problems and issues and asked members for their thoughts.
- Kat Hall responded that it looked good, and that the suggestion makes sense.
- Bernadette Mele moved onto the section titled recommendations and explained the recommendations of the Task Force. She asked members for their thoughts regarding the first recommendation.
- Adam Kaye asked about the timeline of the Task Force as the draft report was issued late and he couldn't look through it and asked if they would be able to have another meeting.
- Bernadette Mele responded that they could have another meeting and stated that they need to finish before the Connecticut General Assembly convenes.
- Karen Griffiths stated that she feels the same as Adam Kaye as she couldn't go through it as well.
- Bernadette Mele answered that they can go through the report today and then they will be able to schedule another meeting to vote on the final report after revisions are made. She asked members if they see any glaring problems with the first three recommendations of the draft report.
- Adam Kaye asked if the goal of the recommendations is to speak more broadly and avoid going into the specifics.

- Bernadette Mele answered that they would like to speak more broadly and stated that there is more information within the report that could help legislators. She summarized the second, third and fourth recommendations of loan forgiveness, grant funding, as well as recruitment and marketing support. She stated that the report contains information to add the three modalities to the current state forgiveness program.
- Adam Kaye commented on the order of the recommendations as he believes that they are ordered backwards in how someone would go through schooling. He stated that they can reorder them to emphasize the issue of the shortage.
- Bernadette Mele answered that the recommendations are ordered by priority.
- Adam Kaye stated that is reasonable.
- Karen Griffiths agreed with Bernadette Mele.
- Bernadette Mele stated that the draft report is missing some information and that she will add more information to the section regarding recommendations.
- Karen Griffiths asked that recommendation two be expanded to include respiratory care therapists or to make it clear that it includes the three professions.
- Bernadette Mele stated that some information missing in the recommendations is misplaced in the report and she will move it to the recommendation section.
- Karen Griffiths asked if they would even want that information to be in the recommendation section as they may want to leave the recommendation section more general to give it a greater chance of passage into legislation.
- Bernadette Mele asked Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey for her thoughts. She asked members to keep in mind that they have the draft report that has formatting errors. She stated that now is the time to talk about any glaring issues that members have seen in the report. She asked members their thoughts regarding the executive summary.
- Karen Griffiths added that based on feedback from Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey they should keep it more general and to be aware of the audience.
- Bernadette Mele and Karen Griffiths revised some sentences of the executive summary.

- Bernadette Mele further went through the executive summary and asked members if they had any further thoughts. She stated that she would like to determine an adequate timeframe to review the report and asked members when they would be able to complete that review.
- Adam Kaye responded that he can meet next week.
- Bernadette Mele stated that she will include additional information in the report as she wanted to get the heart of the report to the members. She added that she isn't sure if the subgroup can meet before the full Working Group because of time constraints.
- Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey extended her thanks to the members of the Working Group and agrees with Bernadette Mele suggestion. She suggested that members can send their comments to Bernadette Mele, and she can compile a draft even if the subgroup is unable to meet. She added the process of the report after it is submitted and stated that these conversations continue after the Working Group concludes.
- Bernadette Mele asked when the Connecticut General Assembly convenes.
- Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey responded that it was January 8<sup>th</sup> and doesn't recommend the Task Force be extended due to the constraints of the support staff. She encouraged the Task Force to stick to the deadline but stated that it is possible for the Task Force to continue but the mechanics of convening a meeting will become more difficult.
- Bernadette Mele agreed with Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey and stated that they can put in a deadline for comments to make it easier to commit to the report. She asked members for an appropriate timeline for them to be able to review the draft and share revisions with her.
- Karen Griffiths asked if they would still like to do the subgroup and would like that meeting done after comments have come in. She stated that she is flexible next week and asked Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey if the recommendations should be more specific or narrow.
- Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey answered that due to time constraints she believes that it would be more helpful to get the report in and for specificity she answered that members could testify at legislative public hearings to make the recommendations more specific. She believes that they shouldn't get too deep into specifics due to the time constraints.
- Bernadette Mele asked if they can get their comments in by December 18<sup>th</sup>.

- Karen Griffiths asked if they could make the deadline December 17<sup>th</sup> then the subgroup can meet at the 18<sup>th</sup>. She stated that she would like a subgroup meeting to discuss the report and revisions.
- Kat Hall stated that she can get any edits in by end of day of December 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Adam Kaye stated that he doesn't anticipate sending in any comments after the weekend.
- Bernadette Mele asked if the deadline of December 17<sup>th</sup> works.
- Matthew Green believes that the December 17<sup>th</sup> deadline works and asked when they can vote on the final report with the full Task Force.
- Bernadette Mele stated that she can do December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey added that she hears the desire for a subgroup meeting, and nothing stops a non-forum group from having a conversation and believes that they should work backwards from when they want the full group to vote. She suggested that the full group vote on December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Administrative staff stated that December 20<sup>th</sup> is open.
- Adam Kaye stated that he is free for December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Bernadette Mele asked members what times work on December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Kat Hall stated that Paul Kidwell might work for December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Karen Griffiths stated that she supports a morning meeting.
- Sajjad Raza stated that a morning meeting works for him too.
- Adam Kaye stated that he is busy until 9 AM and free for most of the day.
- Matthew Green stated that he supports a 9:30 or 10:00 AM time.
- Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey recommended a 9:30 AM start for December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Bernadette Mele agrees with Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey and announced that the full Task Force will meet on 9:30 AM for December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Karen Griffiths suggested the subgroup meet on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

- Bernadette Mele and Matthew Green agree to meet on December 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Karen Griffiths stated that she would have to do the morning and suggested a start time between 9 and 11 AM.
- Bernadette Mele suggested 9:30 AM.
- Karen Griffiths and Matthew Green agree with a 9:30 AM start time.

### III. Adjournment

- Bernadette Mele asked for a motion to adjourn. Adam Kaye motioned to adjourn, and it is seconded by Bernadette Mele.
- The meeting adjourned at 11:22 AM.