

The Governor's claim that the "suspension" of the LPN program will save the State \$1.7 million is a complete fallacy. The \$1.7 million figure seems to be based on the remainder of the salary for the 44 LPN instructors and department heads; the figure would indicate \$38,636 per employee for slightly more than half a year, a reasonable figure. However, only five of the 44 members do not have layoff protection from the 2009 SEBAC agreement. These five teachers are, not surprisingly, the lowest paid employees of the 44. The savings in this fiscal year would be closer to \$150,000 than \$1.7 million.

Even that minimal cost savings is offset by other factors. The 39 teachers with layoff protection work 188-day schedules; prorating their salaries to a standard 240-day work year would actually cost the State over \$400,000. The loss in tuition revenue, even at the unnecessarily low fee currently charged by the State, would be over \$500,000. The State also would have to reimburse nearly 1000 students the \$50 application fee. Eliminating the program would not save \$1.7 million dollars this fiscal year; it would actually cost the State nearly \$1 million more than simply running the program. Those additional costs would then be incurred each semester next year.

As little sense as eliminating the program makes in the short term, it makes even less sense in the long term. Simply doubling the tuition, a move that is long overdue and would still put the vastly superior CTHSS LPN program at less than half the cost of the private schools, would make the per pupil cost to the State for the entire program at \$9000. A graduate from our program who is hired for a 35-hour, \$20 per hour job – a very conservative figure, and the LPN program has 100% job placement rate – would repay the State's investment in income tax within seven years. When one considers that many if not most of the students currently receive various forms of State assistance, the State's investment in the students completing this program is returned within five years.

Everyone agrees nursing education is important for the quality of life for our citizens. In this case, that fact is almost beside the point. The Governor has made a decision to cut costs that actually increases the deficit, both in the immediate term and in the foreseeable future. We need you to challenge the Governor to defend this cut; no one who has seriously looked at it could do so.

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