

My name is Ted Moskowitz, and I have been a teacher and department head in the LPN program for 22 years. I have seen the program go through several changes and incarnations through the years.

When I first began 22 years ago, the program was 13 months in duration and free to the students. The curriculum has grown over the years, as the complexity of health care has grown, and now the program takes 18 months to complete. There is now tuition charged to the students, albeit not a hefty tuition like those found in the private school sector.

The one common thread throughout the years has been the students we serve. We represent an available and affordable career solution to a segment of Connecticut that is in great need of career training. We tend to attract the minority, the immigrant, and the poor. We attract the people that need to get a helping hand to get “on their feet”. Many of our students are on some form of public assistance, and are looking for a way to improve their station in life. A program like this is not available at the community college level. There is always a need for nurses, so this program seems like a perfect marriage.

So now we come to another crossroad in the LPN program. This time the Governor wants to close the program because it costs too much money. As fate would have it, I ran into the governor last week on the grounds of the capitol. I had a spontaneous 60 second meeting with her. I mentioned that I was from the LPN program and I knew she intended to close it. She acknowledged my sentiments and said she was sorry. I mentioned that if it was a question of financing the program, then would she consider raising the tuition. She said that she was not against that strategy at all, and that it seemed like if that could be accomplished, then she could see the programs remaining open.

To close this program is shortsighted. Every study done of the nursing workforce shows that is an aging workforce, and as many nurses approach their retirement, the profession needs replenishing. This will affect everyone who intends to live a long life, as eventually many of us will need a nurse.