

State of New Hampshire Treasury  
Finance Division II  
HB 2, section 52-53 & 58-61  
Fiscal Years 2024-2025

- The State Treasury takes no position on this proposed legislation.
- The College Tuition Savings Plan Advisory Commission (“Advisory Commission”) oversees the State’s 529 Plan and three scholarship programs. The State Treasurer is a member of the Advisory Commission and acts as Trustee for the New Hampshire 529 Plan Trust. In addition the State Treasury provides administrative support to the Advisory Commission.
- RSA 6:38 establishes the New Hampshire Excellence in Higher Education Trust Fund and grants authority to charge an administrative assessment to New Hampshire 529 Plan participants to fund scholarships that benefit New Hampshire residents attending New Hampshire institutions.
- Two scholarship programs are funded with the administrative assessment, the UNIQUE annual allocation program (“Annual Awards”) and UNIQUE endowment allocation program (“Endowment Program”). The Annual Program provides direct grants to New Hampshire students and the Endowment Program provides monthly grants to restricted institution endowments, which in turn provide direct scholarships in perpetuity.
- The third scholarship program is the Governor’s Scholarship Program which is funded with general funds and not impacted by this proposal.
- On December 10, 2021, the Advisory Commission amended its administrative rules to expand the Annual Award program to be able to benefit more New Hampshire students. With that change, the Advisory Commission was able to increase the award amount and the number of eligible students.
- In fiscal year 2023, approximately 6,400 students are expected to receive a UNIQUE Annual Award, \$1,300 for a full-time student, prorated for a part-time students. Between the two programs, the expected total cost is approximately \$14 million.
- For fiscal year 2024, projections indicate that over 10,000 awards of \$1,500 will be granted to New Hampshire students. For the two programs, the projected cost is \$17 million.

Testimony

Debby Scire

March 10, 2023

HB2

My name is Debby Scire, President of the NH College and University Council. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you on the proposed changes to the UNIQUE plan and the establishment of a targeted workforce development student debt relief program.

HB2 proposes to make major changes to the UNIQUE program. The fees generated to support the program may vary year to year based on economic performance. That is why the independent 529 commission, which has representatives from both the Senate and the House, that administers the program developed both a scholarship fund as well as the campus based restricted scholarship fund that assures through good and bad economic times the money will continue to be available to New Hampshire students and their families. One hundred percent of these funds are used specifically for student scholarships.

Students who receive these scholarships are not required to repay them. This is pure aid to NH students and families. Not loans! These scholarships may mean the difference between a student heading to college or deciding he or she simply can't afford the expense. It is a tremendously successful program and to date has disbursed 186M dollars in scholarship funds to needy students.

Over the years, there has been strong bipartisan support for the UNIQUE scholarship program, and the legislature has consistently turned back efforts to redirect these funds for other purposes and we hope that continues in this legislative session.

While student debt assistance is an important objective, it should not come at the expense of student scholarships. For every million dollars taken from the existing program, 1,000 scholarships to New Hampshire students are lost.

We've heard NH business leaders discuss the need for a well educated work force and that the vast majority of high-paying jobs in our state will require a degree. so the fact that we are considering taking away from scholarships for students to earn a college degree,- to pay for loans makes it bad public policy.

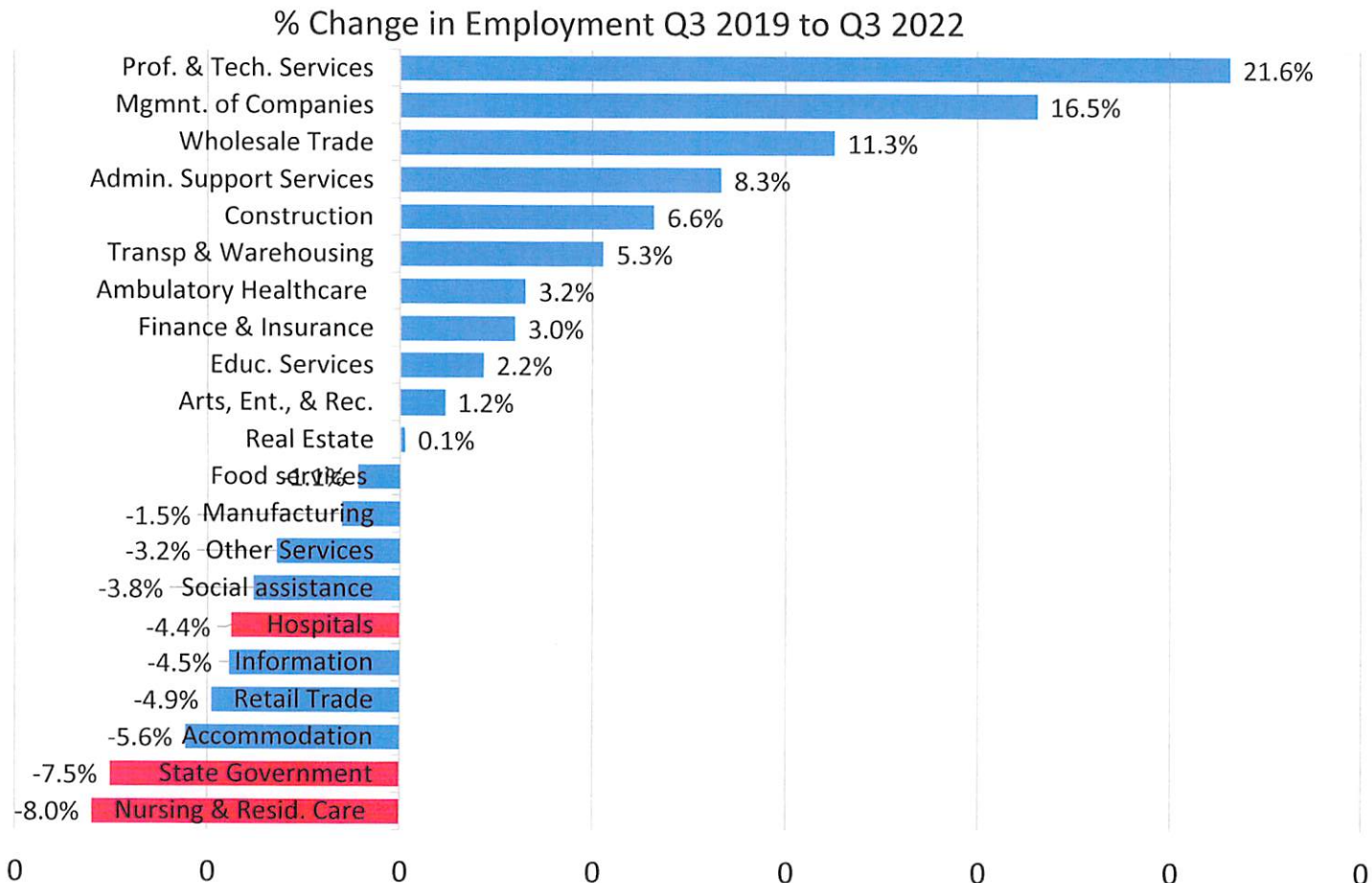
This change would result in the loss of millions of dollars in student scholarships for the most financially vulnerable NH families. According to the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs, NH ranks at the bottom for tuition aid for students. (#50- when calculating the grant dollar amounts/per population for AY 20/21)

The UNIQUE College Savings Plan is the only long term scholarship program that exists in the state that has a long established record of success in assisting New Hampshire students and their families. I ask you to stand with the students and families of New Hampshire who depend on the UNIQUE scholarships to make a college education more affordable.

# Loan Forgiveness Can help Address Key Healthcare Workforce Shortages

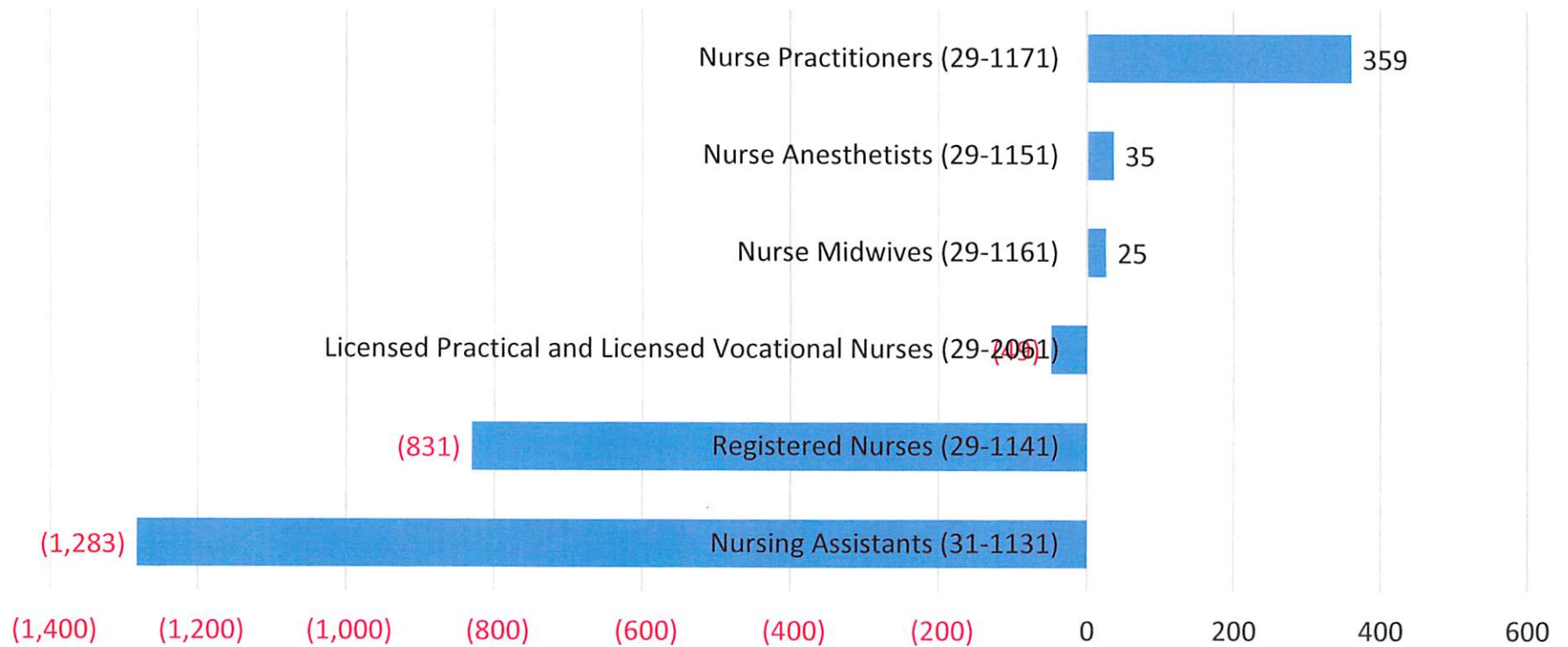
Testimony Before the New Hampshire House Finance Committee  
March 10, 2023

## Hospitals, Nursing and Residential Care Facilities Have Among the Largest Employment Declines on a Percentage Basis From Pre- to Post-Pandemic



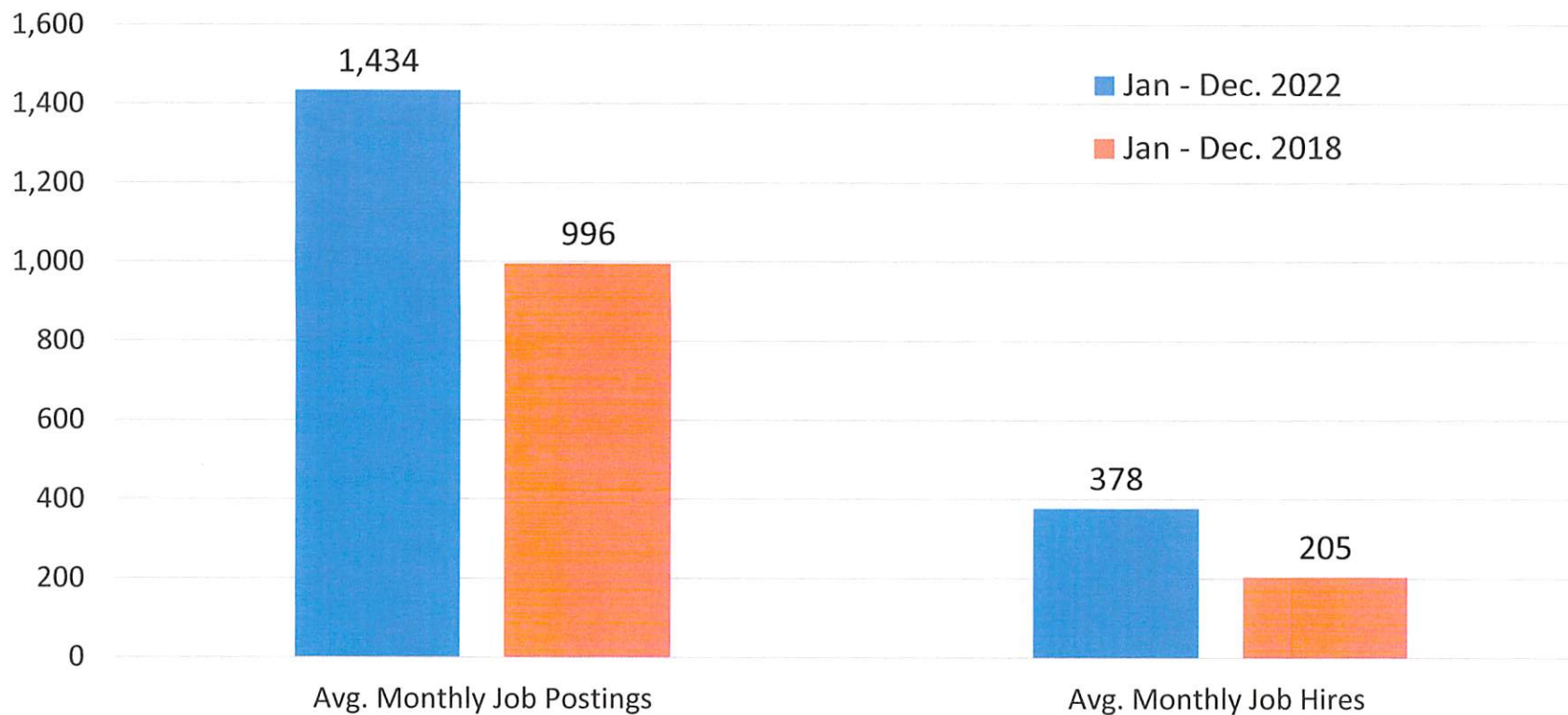
# Much of the Decline in Healthcare Jobs in New Hampshire is in the Nursing Field

Change in Nursing Employment in NH 2018 to 2022

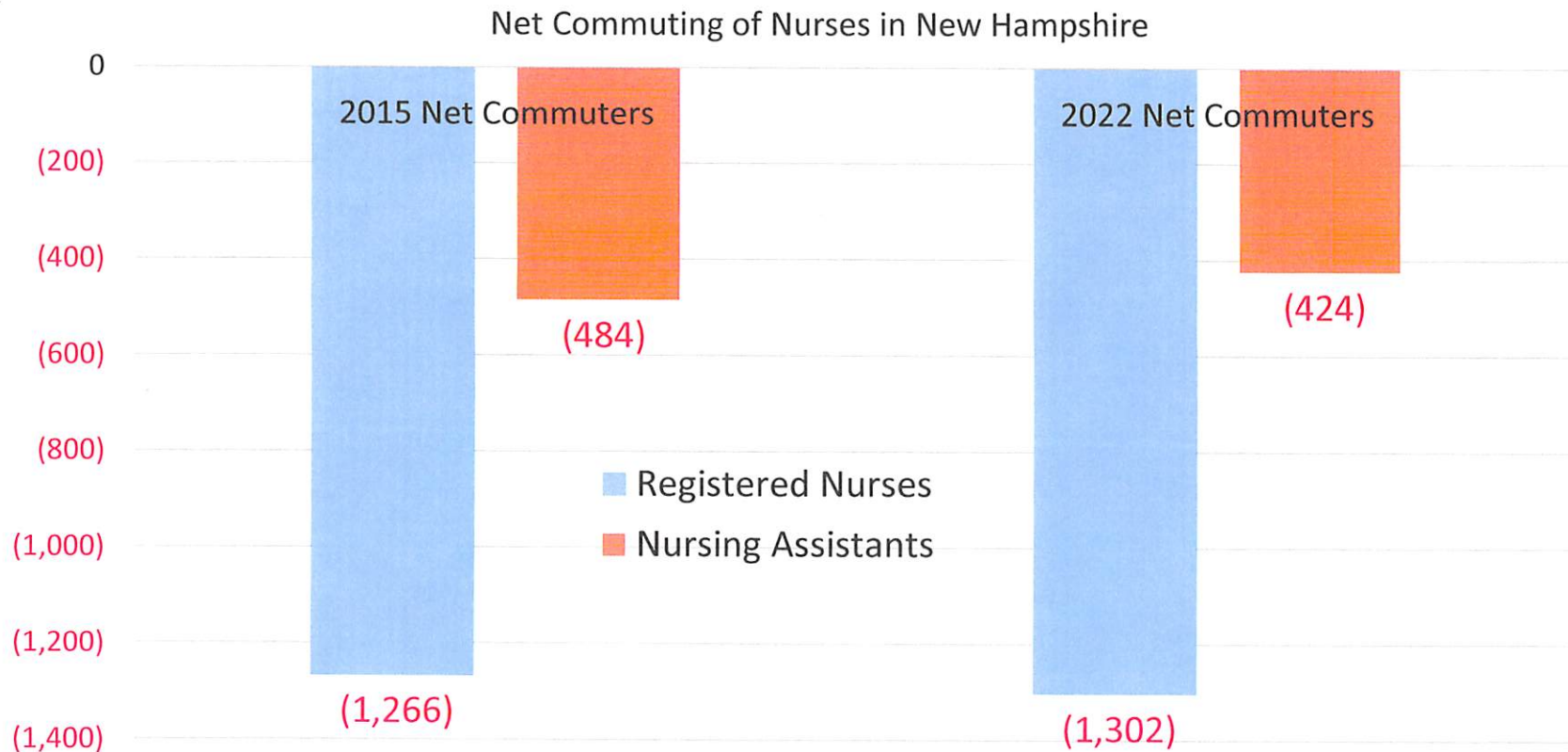


## Average Monthly Hiring of Registered Nurses Nearly Doubled From Pre-Pandemic Levels, but Job Postings Have Increased Over 40 Percent

Job Openings and Hirings Registered Nurses in New Hampshire



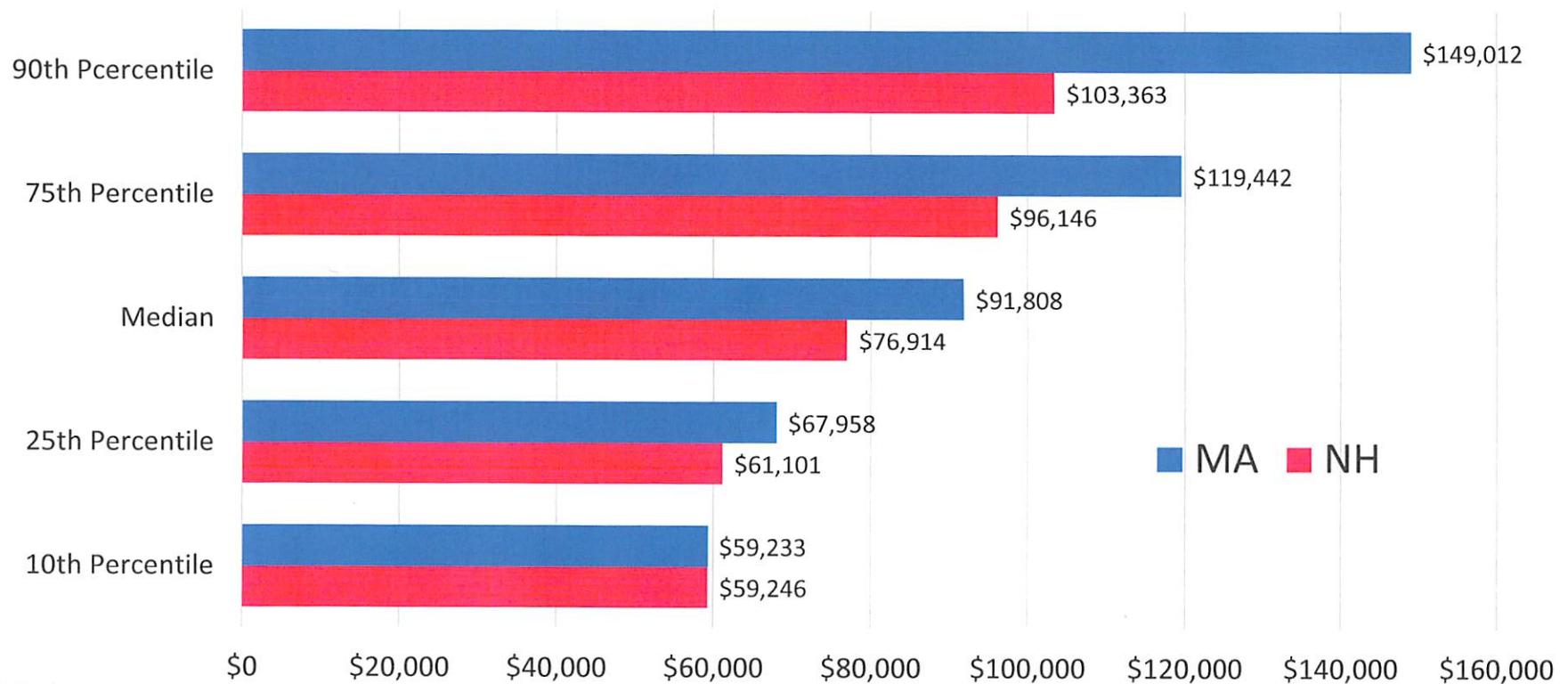
## On Net, About 1,300 More Registered Nurses Commute Out of New Hampshire to Work than Commute Into the State





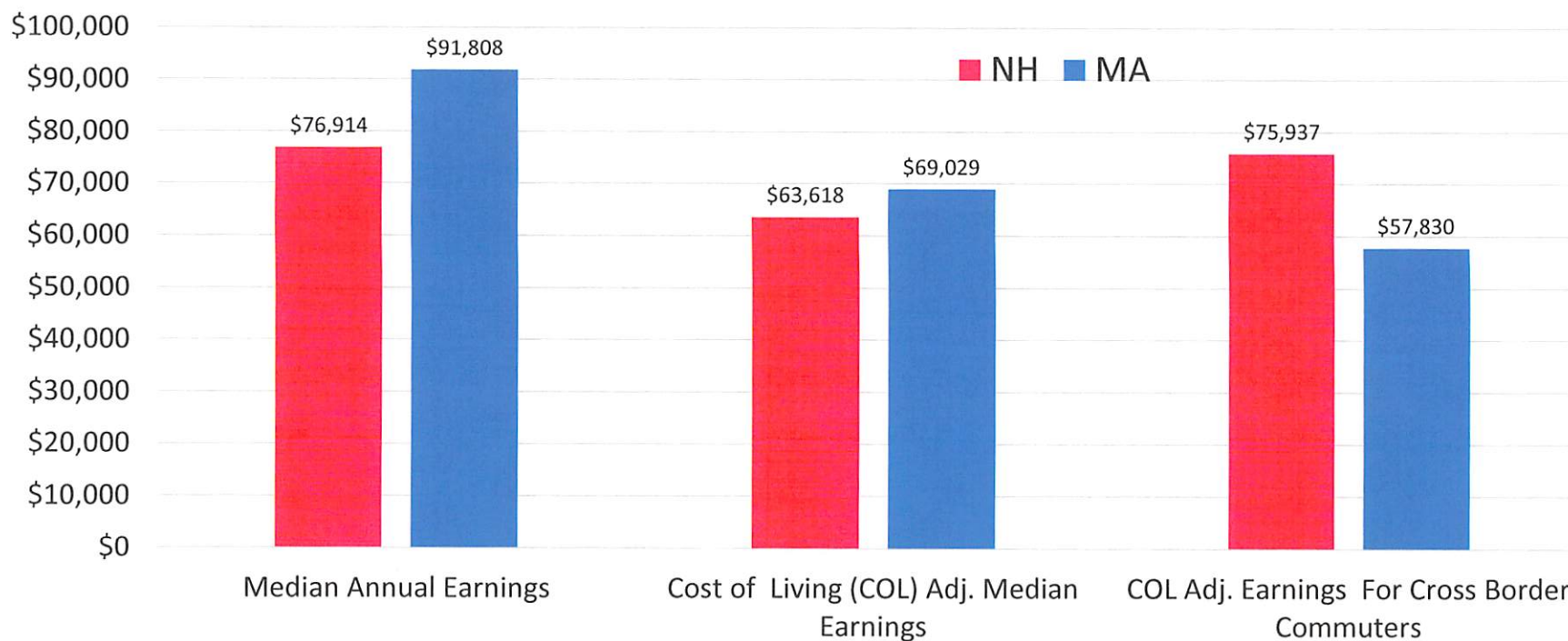
## Annual Earnings Differentials Increase Sharply for Registered Nurses Between New Hampshire and Massachusetts as Experience Increases

Median Annual Earnings for Registered Nurses

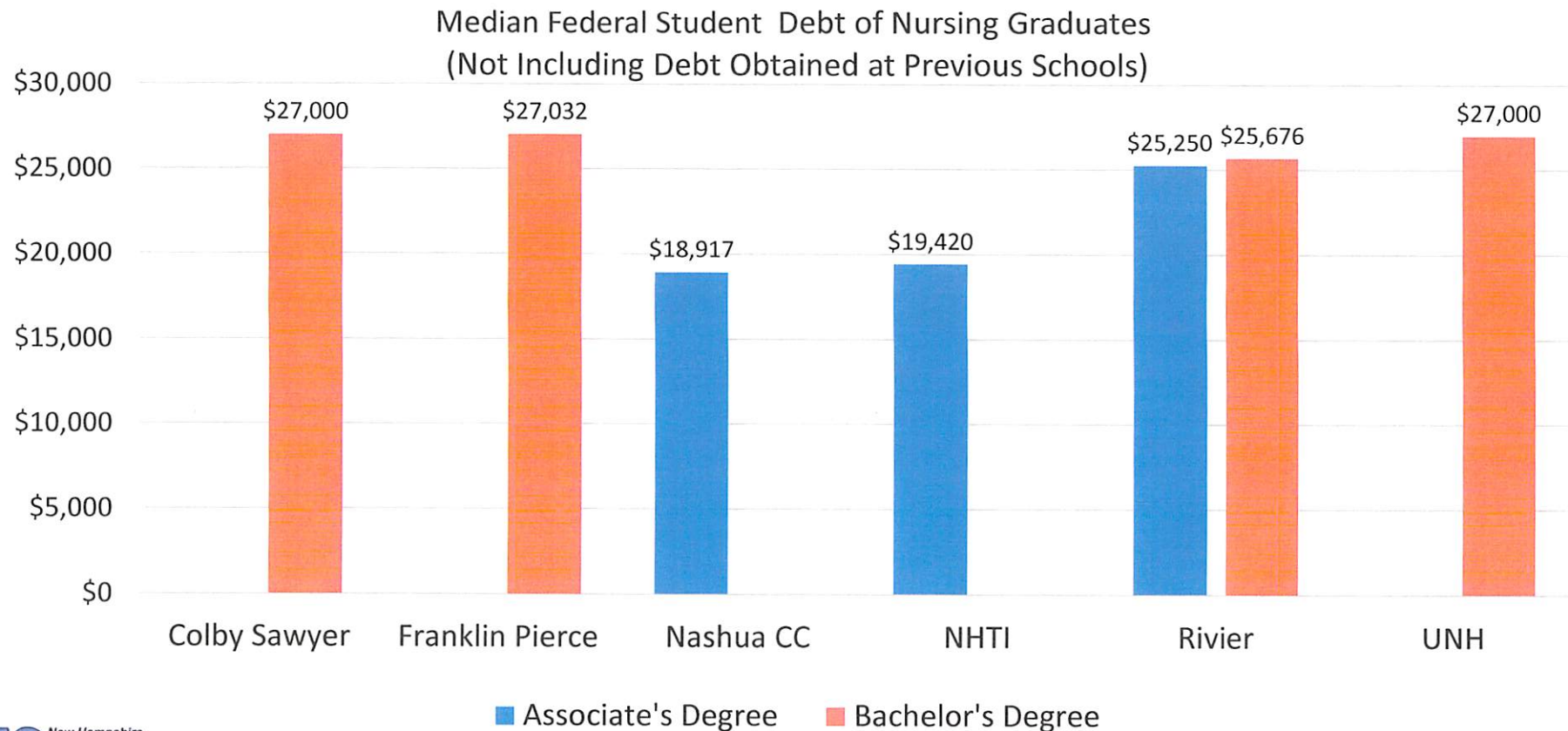


Salaries are Higher in Massachusetts Even When Adjusted for Cost of Living but There are Compelling Economic Incentives for Nurses to Live in New Hampshire but Work in Massachusetts and Disincentives for Living in Massachusetts and Working in New Hampshire

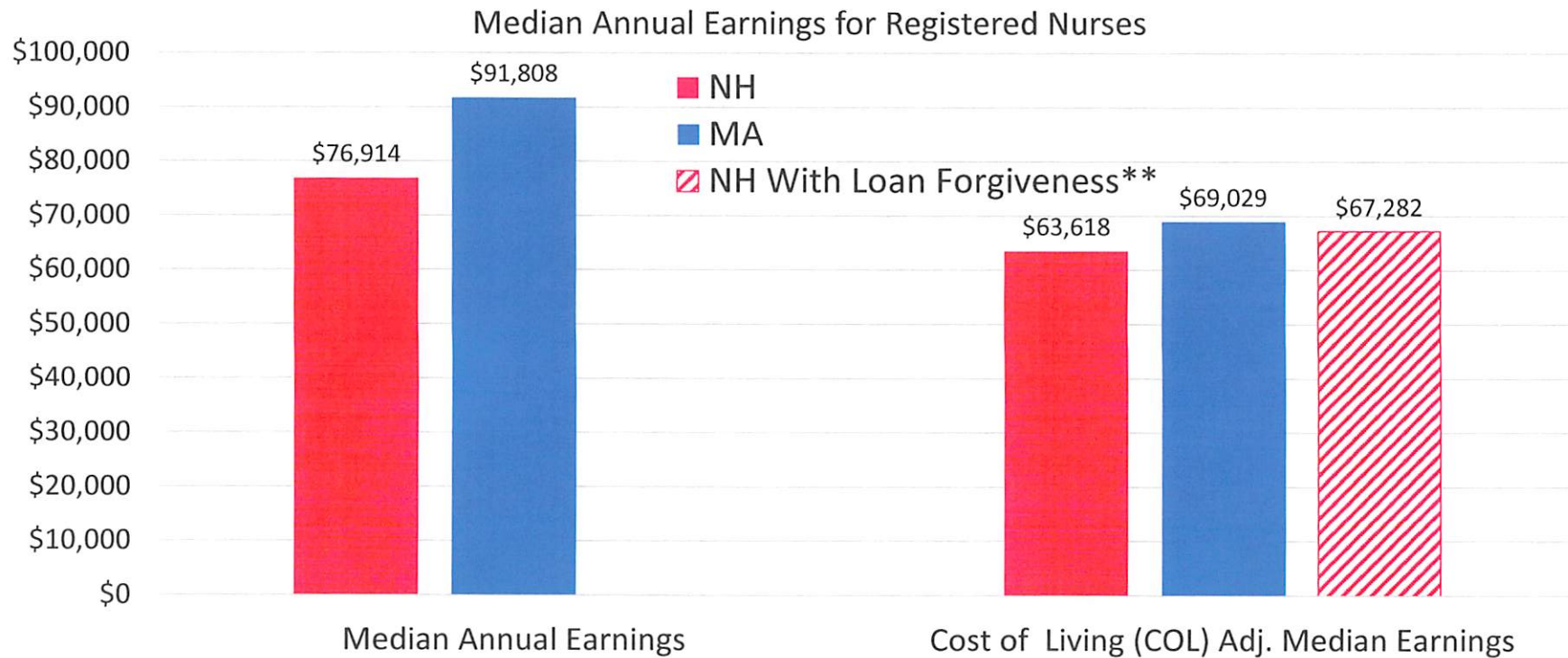
Median Annual Earnings for Registered Nurses



## A Majority of Nursing Students Graduate With More Than \$25,000 in Federal Student Debt



## Loan Forgiveness Can Help Make Registered Nurse Wages in New Hampshire Competitive With Massachusetts Wages



\*\* Assumes \$27,500 in debt at 6.0% interest amortized over 120 payments (10 years) with impact on annual Earnings equal to 12 monthly payment of \$305.31 or \$3,663.68 annually. Alternatively, the lump sum value after Initial three year period is \$21,098.96 in loan forgiveness.

## Conclusions

- The New Hampshire Labor Market Remains Strong. Job Growth in 2022 Exceeded Forecasts but Labor Shortages are Still the Biggest Obstacle to Greater Job Growth
- Healthcare and State Government are Facing Most Severe Labor Shortages Compared to Pre-Pandemic Levels (Retail Decline is, in Part, a Function of Consumer Trends)
- Hospitals and Nursing and Residential Care Facilities (Those Healthcare Industries Most Exposed to State and Federal Insurance Payments) Have Seen the Greatest Declines in Key Healthcare Occupations
- Nurses Account for the Bulk of Healthcare Labor Shortages Due to Increased Wage Competition and Increased Competition From Non-Healthcare Industries
- Wage Differentials Across States Lead to Increasing “Out-of-State” Commuting of Registered Nurses
- A Student Loan Forgiveness Program Could Help Significantly Level the Wage Competitive Disadvantage for Nurses Working in New Hampshire