

CARIBOU COUNTY  
RESOLUTION #01-03  
TO SUPPORT HOSPITAL'S EFFORTS

WHEREAS, the Caribou County Hospital needs to hire more RN's and;

WHEREAS, there are not enough RN's available and it is believed the situation will get worse unless there is an increase in the number of nurses in the marketplace;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CARIBOU COUNTY COMMISSIONERS hereby support the Caribou County Hospital in requesting that ISU add an RN option to the LPN program within ISU's School of Applied Technology to make it easier and less expensive for one to become a nurse.

Signed: Bruce M. Dudge Date 03-19-01

**CARIBOU MEMORIAL  
HOSPITAL  
AND LIVING CENTER**  
300 South 3<sup>rd</sup> West • Soda Springs, ID 83276 • (208) 547-3341 • fax (208) 547-2790

February 28, 2001

Caribou County Board of Commissioners  
Caribou County Courthouse  
PO Box 775  
Soda Springs, Idaho 83276

Dear County Commissioners:

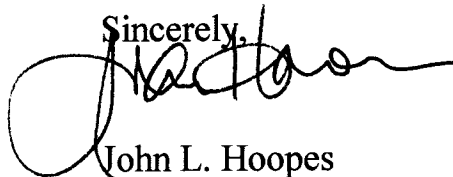
As you may know, there is a severe shortage of registered nurses and this is adversely affecting our hospital. While there isn't one easy fix to this complex problem, which is also affecting the entire nation, we believe that ISU, the closest school where county residents could go to become nurses, could decrease the time and cost to become a nurse by 50%, if they would.

Enclosed is a copy of a letter sent by a group of 13 hospitals to ISU and a copy of a resolution passed on February 26 by Caribou Memorial Hospital's Board of Directors encouraging ISU to take action.

We believe it would be very helpful if the County Commissioners could also pass a resolution at your next meeting, similar to the one the Hospital Board passed, and send a copy of it to ISU President Bowen (his address is listed on the enclosed letter).

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



John L. Hoopes  
Chief Executive Officer

Enclosures

# **Public Hospital Cooperative of Southeast Idaho**

*A cooperative of 13 public hospitals in Southeast Idaho & Western Wyoming*

**Brenda Rees, CPA, Coordinator, 5554 Marshwood Lane #C, Murray, UT 84107, Phone (801) 50-6237**

**Bannock Regional Medical Center (Pocatello)**

**Bingham Memorial Hospital (Blackfoot)**

**Franklin County Medical Center (Preston)**

**Lost Rivers District Hospital (Arco)**

**Minidoka Memorial Hospital (Rupert)**

**Steele Memorial Hospital (Salmon)**

**Bear Lake Memorial Hospital (Montpelier)**

**Caribou Memorial Hospital (Soda Springs)**

**Harms Memorial Hospital (American Falls)**

**Madison Memorial Hospital (Rexburg)**

**Oneida County Hospital (Malad)**

**Star Valley Hospital (Afton, WY)**

**Teton Valley Hospital (Driggs)**

February 21, 2001

President Richard L. Bowen  
Idaho State University  
P.O. Box 8270  
Pocatello, Idaho 83209

Dear President Bowen:

As you may know, hospitals in Southeast Idaho currently have a serious shortage of nurses, both RNs and LPNs. At the present time the twelve hospitals represented by this organization, have at least 78 vacancies for nurses that we can't fill.

Because of demographics ("baby boomers" retiring and also using more health care) and other issues, the problem is only going to worsen. Wages may have been part of the problem, so some of our hospitals have recently increased nurses' wages by as much as 20%. The wages we pay nurses are generally competitive with other parts of the country.

We know of people in our communities in Southeast Idaho who would like to become nurses, but current programs are too far away from home, cost too much money and take too long to complete.

ISU's School of Applied Technology has an LPN program that takes 2½ semesters to complete and costs \$5,356, not including housing, transportation, etc. (We have heard there is discussion about making it longer and more expensive.) ISU's baccalaureate program generally takes five to complete and costs at least \$12,000.

By comparison, the RN programs at the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls and at Ricks College in Rexburg, both produce well trained nurses at half the cost and in half the time. In becoming a university, Ricks College will be making available a bachelors degree for their RNs, but they are keeping the two year option available. Someone could still become a functioning RN in two years, then take additional classes to get a BSN degree from BYU-Idaho. We believe this is a wonderful option.

This letter is to request that instead of making it more difficult and expensive for people to become nurses through ISU, that you add another 2-3 semesters to the LPN program at the ISU School of Applied Technology, so graduates could become RNs, then give

President Bowen  
February 21, 2001  
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them the option of continuing with ISU and getting a BS through the regular baccalaureate program. We're not asking that you to eliminate the BSN program, just make a two year RN option available so people who are interested in this option wouldn't have to travel so far from their homes and spend so much money.

We suspect there will be a lot of political and turf problems with implementing this idea, and perhaps this is why hospital administrators haven't been asked what they want and need. We reviewed this letter at our monthly meeting in Pocatello on February 21 and unanimously agreed to send you this letter. We can assure you that our hospitals and physician practices, which employ most of the nurses in this part of Idaho, desperately need more nurses, and we would be very happy to have more 2 ½ semester LPNs and two year RNs to be able to employ.

We would also be willing to work with the Idaho Hospital Association, which represents our industry, to see if we could get you more money, from various sources, to help implement such a program to increase the number of nurses, if that would be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Carl Hanson, Chairman  
Public Hospital Cooperative of  
Southeast Idaho

c: Linda Hatzenbueler, Dean, College of Health Related Professions  
Ranaye L. Marsh, Dean, School of Applied Technology  
Steven A. Millard, President, Idaho Hospital Association  
All 13 PHCSI Hospital Boards of Directors/Trustees  
All 19 IHA Southeast Conference Hospitals, which in addition to the PHCSI hospitals include: Cassia Regional Medical Center, Burley  
Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center, Idaho Falls  
Magic Valley Regional Medical Center, Twin Falls  
Pocatello Regional Medical Center, Pocatello  
St. Benedict's Family Medical Center, Jerome  
State Hospital South, Blackfoot  
Twin Falls Clinic & Hospital, Twin Falls