EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 139

WHEREAS, This State is experiencing a critical shortage in its nursing workforce; and

WHEREAS, A shortage of 14,000 registered nurses and 3,800 licensed practical nurses is forecasted for 2006, and by 2020, the shortage may be over 24,000 registered nurses; and

WHEREAS, A number of factors are contributing to the shortage, including the delivery of more care in outpatient settings, shorter lengths of stay in acute and long-term care settings, and the development of alternatives to nursing home care; and

WHEREAS, These changes have resulted in more employment options for nurses that make it difficult for employers to recruit and retain qualified nursing personnel; and

WHEREAS, The current shortage is expected to worsen as nursing school enrollments continue to decline and a significant number of nurses retire over the next decade; and

WHEREAS, The multifaceted nature of these problems necessitates that all interested and affected parties cooperate and collaborate in the development of solutions;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN O. BENNETT, Acting Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. The Advisory Council to Promote the Profession of Nursing in New Jersey is hereby established as set forth in this Order. The Advisory Council shall consist of sixteen (16) members as follows:
   a. Five (5) non-voting, ex officio members, including the chair and vice chair, appointed by the Governor, which shall include the Commissioners of Health and Senior Services, Human Services, Education and Labor and the Executive Director of the New Jersey Board of Nursing in the Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Law and Public Safety, or their designees;
   b. Seven (7) public members appointed by the Governor, which shall include one (1) nurse upon the recommendation of the New Jersey State Nurses Association, one (1) nurse upon the recommendation of the Licensed Practical Nurses Association of New Jersey, Inc., two (2) nurses upon the recommendation of the Organization of Nursing Executives of New Jersey, one (1) nurse educator teaching or administering and A.D. program, one (1) nurse educator teaching or administering a B.S.N. program, and one (1) nurse educator teaching or administering a diploma school program.
   c. Two (2) members appointed by the President of the Senate, who shall be of different political parties and who shall be actively involved in nursing services; and
   d. Two (2) members appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, who shall be of different political parties and who shall be actively involved in nursing services.

2. The Advisory Council shall assist the Governor in proposing legislation and its
recommendations shall be based upon the following objectives:

a. The recommendations must include a determination of the current extent and long-term implications of the growing shortage of nursing personnel in the State;

b. The recommendations must relate to the education, recruitment and retention of qualified nursing personnel in New Jersey; and

c. The recommendations must evaluate mechanisms currently available in the State and other states that are intended to enhance the education, recruitment and retention of nurses in the workforce.

3. The Advisory Council shall present its recommendations on or before September 1, 2002.

4. The Advisory Council is authorized to call upon any department, office, division or agency of State government to provide such information, resources or other assistance deemed necessary to discharge its responsibilities under this Order. Each department, office, division and agency of this State is hereby required to cooperate with the Advisory Council and to furnish it with such information, personnel and assistance as is necessary to accomplish the purposes of this Order.

5. The Advisory Council shall hold at least three (3) public hearings as it discharges its responsibilities under this Order.

6. This Order shall take effect immediately.

Dated January 9, 2002.