
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5010

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senate Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Frockt, Rolfes, Kohl-Welles, Hasegawa, Jayapal, Keiser, and Ranker)

READ FIRST TIME 01/30/15.

1 AN ACT Relating to the health professional loan repayment and
2 scholarship program fund; adding new sections to chapter 28B.115 RCW;
3 and making appropriations.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.115
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 The legislature finds that improved access to comprehensive
8 health care services is vital to achieve health equity and an
9 increased quality of healthy life for the people of Washington. Many
10 underserved communities facing financial barriers, including those
11 related to providers' health education loan debt and disparate
12 salaries, struggle to attract and retain well-trained health
13 professionals. Health professional shortage areas also face
14 additional health care delivery challenges, including patient income
15 or transportation barriers and lower provider service reimbursements.

16 The health professional loan repayment and scholarship program
17 fund assists underserved communities in recruiting and retaining
18 qualified health professionals. The incentive program also encourages
19 interested and academically prepared health care students and
20 professionals to consider practice in shortage areas. The legislature
21 finds that interested students who are encouraged to explore the

1 benefits and unique professional challenges presented in rural health
2 practice are more likely to establish community roots and remain in
3 the area in which they are trained. Providing underserved communities
4 additional resources to recruit qualified health professionals
5 reinforces the state's commitment to improve access to comprehensive
6 health care for all persons in Washington.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.115
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this
10 section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

11 (a) "EDD participant" means a doctor in nursing education who has
12 received a loan repayment award and has commenced practice teaching
13 nursing or an eligible nurse who has received a scholarship under
14 this EDD program.

15 (b) "EDD program" means the nursing educator loan repayment and
16 scholarship program.

17 (c) "Eligible nurse" means a registered nurse student who has
18 been accepted into an eligible nursing education program and has
19 declared an intention to teach nursing upon completion of the nursing
20 education program.

21 (d) "Eligible nursing education programs" means education
22 programs approved by the department that lead to a doctoral degree in
23 nursing education.

24 (e) "Teaching service obligation" means an obligation by the EDD
25 participant to teach nursing in Washington state for a period to be
26 established as provided for in this section.

27 (2) The nurse educator loan repayment and scholarship program is
28 established. The EDD program shall be administered by the office. In
29 administering this program, the office shall:

30 (a) Select eligible nurses to participate in the loan repayment
31 portion of the EDD program;

32 (b) Adopt rules and develop guidelines to administer the EDD
33 program;

34 (c) Collect and manage repayments from EDD participants who do
35 not meet their service obligations under this section;

36 (d) Publicize the EDD program; and

37 (e) Solicit and accept grants and donations from public and
38 private sources for the EDD program.

1 (3) The office, in consultation with the department and the
2 department of social and health services, shall:

3 (a) Establish the annual award amount for each eligible nurse
4 which must be based upon an assessment of reasonable annual eligible
5 expenses involved in education for each eligible nurse. The annual
6 award amount may be established at a level less than annual eligible
7 expenses. The awards may not be paid for more than a maximum of four
8 years per individual;

9 (b) Determine any scholarship awards for eligible nurses in an
10 eligible nursing education program, in such a manner to require the
11 recipients to declare an interest in teaching nursing in the state of
12 Washington.

13 (c) Establish the teaching service obligation for eligible
14 nurses, which may be no less than three years or no more than five
15 years. The teaching service obligation may be based upon the amount
16 of the scholarship or loan repayment award such that higher awards
17 involve longer service obligations; and

18 (d) Determine eligible nursing education programs.

19 (4) The office may grant loan repayment and scholarship awards to
20 eligible nurses from the funds appropriated to the health
21 professional loan repayment and scholarship program fund, or from any
22 private or public funds given to the office for this purpose. Nurse
23 participants are ineligible to receive loan repayment if they have
24 received a scholarship from programs authorized under this chapter or
25 chapter 70.180 RCW or are ineligible to receive a scholarship if they
26 have received loan repayment authorized under this chapter or chapter
27 28B.115 RCW.

28 (5) The office shall annually establish the total amount of
29 funding to be awarded for loan repayments and scholarships and the
30 allocations must be established based upon the best utilization of
31 funding for that year.

32 (6) Nurse participants shall agree to meet the required service
33 obligation.

34 (7) Loans from both government and private sources may be repaid
35 by the EDD program. Nurse participants shall agree to allow the
36 office access to loan records and to acquire information from lenders
37 necessary to verify eligibility and to determine payments.

38 (8) Repayment of loans established pursuant to this EDD program
39 must begin no later than ninety days after the individual has become
40 a participant.

1 (9) Except for circumstances beyond their control, nurse
2 participants who serve less than the required teaching obligation are
3 obligated to repay to the EDD program an amount equal to twice the
4 total amount paid by the EDD program on their behalf. The maximum
5 period for repayment is ten years.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The sum of four million dollars, or as
7 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated from the general
8 fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, for the purposes of
9 restoring funding to the health professional loan repayment and
10 scholarship program fund.

11 (2) The sum of four million dollars, or as much thereof as may be
12 necessary, is appropriated from the general fund for the fiscal year
13 ending June 30, 2017, for the purposes of restoring funding to the
14 health professional loan repayment and scholarship program fund.

15 (3) The amounts appropriated in this section shall be deposited
16 into the health professional loan repayment and scholarship program
17 fund.

--- END ---