



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 449

February Session, 2022



AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF PHYSICIANS IN THE STATE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) (a) For the fiscal year ending
2 June 30, 2023, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Office of Higher
3 Education, in collaboration with the Department of Public Health, shall
4 administer, within available appropriations, a physician loan
5 reimbursement grant program to persons who meet the eligibility
6 requirements described in subsection (b) of this section.

7 (b) The program shall provide student loan reimbursement grants to
8 any physician licensed pursuant to chapter 370 of the general statutes
9 who (1) graduated from a medical school in the state or completed his
10 or her medical residency program at a hospital licensed under chapter
11 368v of the general statutes, and (2) is employed as a physician in the
12 state.

13 (c) Any physician who satisfies the eligibility requirements
14 prescribed in subsection (b) of this section and whose application made
15 under subsection (d) of this section is accepted by the Office of Higher
16 Education shall receive a grant for reimbursement of all federal and state
17 educational loans in an amount equal to twenty per cent of the balance
18 of such loans per year for each year the physician is employed as a

19 physician in the state. A physician qualifying under subsection (b) of
20 this section shall only be reimbursed for loan payments made while
21 such physician continues to satisfy such eligibility requirements.

22 (d) Physicians may apply to the Office of Higher Education for grants
23 under this section at such time and in such manner as the executive
24 director of the Office of Higher Education prescribes.

25 (e) Any unexpended funds appropriated for purposes of this section
26 shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year but shall be available for
27 expenditure during the next fiscal year.

28 *Sec. 2. (Effective July 1, 2022)* (a) On or before January 1, 2023, the
29 Commissioner of Public Health shall convene a working group to advise
30 the commissioner regarding methods to enhance physician recruitment
31 in the state. The working group shall examine issues that include, but
32 need not be limited to, (1) recruiting, retaining and compensating
33 primary care, psychiatric and behavioral health care providers; (2) the
34 potential effectiveness of student loan forgiveness; (3) barriers to
35 recruiting and retaining physicians as a result of covenants not to
36 compete, as defined in section 20-14p of the general statutes; (4) access
37 to health care providers; (5) the effect, if any, of the health insurance
38 landscape on limiting health care access; (6) barriers to physician
39 participation in health care networks; and (7) assistance for graduate
40 medical education training.

41 (b) The working group convened pursuant to subsection (a) of this
42 section shall include, but need not be limited to, the following members:
43 (1) A representative of a hospital association in the state; (2) a
44 representative of a medical society in the state; (3) a physician licensed
45 under chapter 370 of the general statutes with a small group practice; (4)
46 a physician licensed under chapter 370 of the general statutes with a
47 multisite group practice; (5) one representative each of at least three
48 different schools of medicine; (6) a representative of a regional physician
49 recruiter association; (7) the human resources director of at least one
50 hospital in the state; (8) a member of a patient advocacy group; and (9)

51 four members of the general public. The working group shall elect
52 chairpersons from among its members. As used in this subsection,
53 "small group practice" means a group practice comprised of less than
54 eight full-time equivalent physicians and "multisite group practice"
55 means a group practice comprised of over one hundred full-time
56 equivalent physicians practicing throughout the state.

57 (c) On or before January 1, 2024, the working group shall report, in
58 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
59 its findings to the commissioner and to the joint standing committee of
60 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public
61 health.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(c), "and whose application made under subsection (d) of this section is accepted by the Office of Higher Education" was inserted before "shall receive" for clarity and consistency.

PH *Joint Favorable Subst.*