

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 358—ASSEMBLYMEN HAFEN,
KRAMER, LEAVITT, TITUS; AND HARDY

MARCH 20, 2019

JOINT SPONSOR: SENATOR HAMMOND

Referred to Committee on Education

SUMMARY—Makes certain changes to attract medical professionals to practice in Nevada. (BDR 34-851)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to health care; creating the Tomorrow's Doctors Program; authorizing the Nevada Office of Rural Health within the University of Nevada School of Medicine to enter into education loan repayment assistance contracts with certain practitioners; making appropriations; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Sections 2-12 of this bill establish the Tomorrow's Doctors Program. **Section 8** of this bill creates the Program for the purpose of providing education loan repayment assistance to certain practitioners. **Section 8** requires the Nevada Office of Rural Health within the University of Nevada School of Medicine to administer the Program. **Section 9** of this bill authorizes the Office to enter into education loan repayment assistance contracts with certain practitioners if: (1) the practitioner locates to or continues to practice in a rural county and the practitioner has a written commitment from a rural hospital that the rural hospital will provide education loan repayment assistance to the practitioner; (2) the education loan repayment assistance provided by the Office through the Program does not exceed any such assistance provided by the rural hospital; and (3) certain other requirements are satisfied. **Section 10** of this bill requires the Office to adopt regulations governing the administration of the Program. **Section 11** of this bill authorizes the Office to accept gifts, grants, bequests and donations to fund the Program in addition to any direct legislative appropriation. **Section 12** of this bill requires the Office to submit to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the next regular session of the Legislature a written report concerning the Program.



Section 13 of this bill makes an appropriation to the Office for allocation to the Program for the purpose of entering into education loan repayment assistance contracts with certain practitioners.

Federal law creates the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program. (42 U.S.C. § 2541-1) Federal law authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make grants to states for the purpose of assisting the states in operating loan repayment programs for the loans of health professionals who provide primary health services in health professional shortage areas. Such grants may not be made to a state unless the state agrees that it will match the federal grants received for such loan repayment programs. (42 U.S.C. § 254q-1) Existing law provides that the University of Nevada School of Medicine may authorize the Nevada Health Service Corps to administer a program under which money for loans is repaid on behalf of a practitioner for each year that he or she practices in an area of Nevada in which a shortage of that type of practitioner exists. (NRS 396.903) **Section 14** of this bill makes an appropriation to the Office of Finance for allocation to the Nevada Health Service Corps to obtain matching federal funds.

Section 15 of this bill makes an appropriation to the Office of Finance for the purpose of funding Graduate Medical Education Grants.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 396 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 12, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 2. *As used in sections 2 to 12, inclusive, of this act, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in sections 3 to 7, inclusive, of this act have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.*

Sec. 3. *“Education loan repayment assistance” means assistance provided to a practitioner whereby the Office and a rural hospital provide money pursuant to sections 2 to 12, inclusive, of this act to the practitioner for the repayment of the education loans of the practitioner.*

Sec. 4. *“Office” means the Nevada Office of Rural Health established pursuant to NRS 396.906.*

Sec. 5. *“Practitioner” means a physician licensed under chapter 630, 630A or 633 of NRS, dentist, licensed nurse, dispensing optician, optometrist, registered physical therapist, podiatric physician, licensed psychologist, chiropractor, doctor of Oriental medicine in any form, medical laboratory director or technician, pharmacist or other person whose principal occupation is the provision of services for health.*

Sec. 6. *“Program” means the Tomorrow’s Doctors Program created by section 8 of this act.*

Sec. 7. *“Rural hospital” has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 449.0177.*



1 **Sec. 8. 1. The Tomorrow's Doctors Program is hereby**
2 *created for the purpose of providing, within funding appropriated*
3 *by the Legislature or accepted by the Office pursuant to section 11*
4 *of this act for this purpose, education loan repayment assistance to*
5 *practitioners pursuant to section 9 of this act.*

6 **2. The Office shall administer the Program.**

7 **Sec. 9. 1. In addition to any money received by the**
8 *practitioner for the repayment of loans pursuant to NRS 396.903,*
9 *the Office may enter into an education loan repayment assistance*
10 *contract with a practitioner if:*

11 **(a) The practitioner:**

12 **(1) Locates to or continues to practice in a rural county;**
13 *and*

14 **(2) Has a written commitment from a rural hospital that the**
15 *rural hospital will provide education loan repayment assistance to*
16 *the practitioner;*

17 **(b) The education loan repayment assistance provided by the**
18 *Program does not exceed the education loan repayment assistance*
19 *provided by the rural hospital; and*

20 **(c) The practitioner is otherwise eligible for education loan**
21 *repayment assistance pursuant to any regulations adopted by the*
22 *Office pursuant to section 10 of this act.*

23 **2. As used in this section, "rural county" means a county in**
24 *this State whose population is less than 100,000.*

25 **Sec. 10. The Office shall adopt regulations governing the**
26 *administration of the Program, including, without limitation,*
27 *regulations that prescribe:*

28 **1. How a practitioner may apply to participate in the**
29 *Program;*

30 **2. Procedures and standards for determining the eligibility of**
31 *a practitioner for education loan repayment assistance;*

32 **3. The procedure for verifying the amount provided by a**
33 *rural hospital to a practitioner for education loan repayment*
34 *assistance;*

35 **4. Any conditions that a practitioner must comply with to**
36 *participate in the Program;*

37 **5. The methodology by which the Office will calculate the**
38 *amount of education loan repayment assistance to be provided to a*
39 *practitioner;*

40 **6. Penalties for a practitioner's failure to comply with any**
41 *conditions or other terms of an education loan repayment*
42 *assistance contract; and*

43 **7. Criteria for modifying or waiving conditions or penalties**
44 *for good cause shown by the practitioner or in a case where a*
45 *practitioner has shown extreme hardship.*



1 **Sec. 11.** *In addition to any direct legislative appropriation*
2 *from the State General Fund, the Office may accept gifts, grants,*
3 *bequests and donations to fund the Program.*

4 **Sec. 12.** *On or before February 1 of each odd-numbered*
5 *year, the Office shall submit to the Director of the Legislative*
6 *Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the next regular session of the*
7 *Legislature a written report on the Program which must include,*
8 *without limitation, information regarding:*

9 1. *The number of practitioners who received education loan*
10 *repayment assistance; and*

11 2. *The revenues and expenditures of the Program.*

12 **Sec. 13.** 1. There is hereby appropriated from the State
13 General Fund to the Nevada Office of Rural Health within the
14 University of Nevada School of Medicine the sum of \$250,000 for
15 allocation to the Tomorrow's Doctors Program created pursuant to
16 section 8 of this act for the purpose of entering into education loan
17 repayment assistance contracts with practitioners pursuant to section
18 9 of this act.

19 2. Any remaining balance of the appropriation made by
20 subsection 1 must not be committed for expenditure after June 30,
21 2021, by the entity to which the appropriation is made or any entity
22 to which money from the appropriation is granted or otherwise
23 transferred in any manner, and any portion of the appropriated
24 money remaining must not be spent for any purpose after
25 September 17, 2021, by either the entity to which the money was
26 appropriated or the entity to which the money was subsequently
27 granted or transferred, and must be reverted to the State General
28 Fund on or before September 17, 2021.

29 **Sec. 14.** 1. There is hereby appropriated from the State
30 General Fund to the Office of Finance the sum of \$250,000 for
31 allocation to the Nevada Health Service Corps created pursuant to
32 NRS 396.900 for the purpose of obtaining matching federal funds.

33 2. Any remaining balance of the appropriation made by
34 subsection 1 must not be committed for expenditure after June 30,
35 2021, by the entity to which the appropriation is made or any entity
36 to which money from the appropriation is granted or otherwise
37 transferred in any manner, and any portion of the appropriated
38 money remaining must not be spent for any purpose after
39 September 17, 2021, by either the entity to which the money was
40 appropriated or the entity to which the money was subsequently
41 granted or transferred, and must be reverted to the State General
42 Fund on or before September 17, 2021.

43 **Sec. 15.** 1. There is hereby appropriated from the State
44 General Fund to the Office of Finance for the purpose of funding
45 Graduate Medical Education Grants the following sums:



For the Fiscal Year 2019-2020..... \$10,500,000
For the Fiscal Year 2020-2021..... \$10,500,000

2. Any remaining balance of the appropriation made by subsection 1 must not be committed for expenditure after June 30, 2021, by the entity to which the appropriation is made or any entity to which money from the appropriation is granted or otherwise transferred in any manner, and any portion of the appropriated money remaining must not be spent for any purpose after September 18, 2020, and September 17, 2021, respectively, by either the entity to which the money was appropriated or the entity to which the money was subsequently granted or transferred, and must be reverted to the State General Fund on or before September 18, 2020, and September 17, 2021, respectively.

Sec. 16. The provisions of subsection 1 of NRS 218D.380 do not apply to any provision of this act which adds or revises a requirement to submit a report to the Legislature.

Sec. 17. This act becomes effective upon passage and approval.

