

## **Health Care Workforce Investment Act**

### **Section-by-Section Summary**

#### **Section 1:**

Designates the bill's title as the "Health Care Workforce Investment Act"

#### **Section 2:**

Expresses the sense of Congress that there is a shortage of health care professionals and states should strengthen their pipelines to meet workforce demands, raise awareness, and improve career and technical education programs, as well as develop strategies for recruitment and provide career development opportunities for the existing health care workforce.

#### **Section 3:**

- (a) Directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to states which establish a State Health Care Workforce Improvement Plan.
  
- (b) The State Plan must include a description of the state's planned incentives, including income tax credits or program partners, and public-private partnerships to increase participation in educational, credentialing, or licensing programs.
  
- (c) All state and federal funding provided to the State Health Care Workforce Investment Fund will be overseen by a state's designated "State Health Care Workforce Council". This Council may be an existing state-level entity or agency and will be responsible for administering state and federal matching funds and private, financial, and philanthropic organizations' contributions. The Fund must be used for program development in the form of incentives, scholarships, or public-private partnerships.

The State Plan must also include the methodology for evaluating program success by using benchmarks which identify reductions in barriers to access such programs and details related to the program's commitment to continued investment in the program or partnership.

Qualified health care programs include those which target historically underserved areas and assist individuals with obtaining a state-issued credential or license.

Additional incentives may be available for programs which provide data to the Council demonstrating an increase in the number of individuals completing an eligible program, the passage rate, relevant workforce data, or other objective factors determined by the Council.

Allows the Council to award up to two scholarships – each one year in length - to individuals enrolled in a qualified health care program so long as the individual submits written proof of their enrollment and completion to the Council. The individual must also commit to practice at least one year in the State from which they received their scholarship for each year they were awarded a scholarship or sign a promissory note agreeing to repay the amount of the scholarship.

- (d) Requires the Council to submit a report by December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year which includes the amount of all funds raised and spent and the recipients and sources of those funds, the number and amounts of scholarships awarded, the graduation and workforce participation rates of

scholarship recipients, and any other relevant data demonstrating the workforce needs of the state.

The Secretary must compile and send information received from the states in addition to any other information HHS deems relevant in a report to Congress by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

- (e) Defines an “eligible individual” as an individual enrolling in a qualified health care program to pursue or advance a career in health care.

Defines a “historically underserved county or region” which demonstrates they have experienced a healthcare workforce shortage and have a regional or countywide unemployment rate exceeding the state’s average within the past five years.

Defines a program partner as an individual or entity which donates to a state’s Fund and is a state-recognized health care provider, a licensed health care facility, or a corporation or health care association operating within the state.

- (f) Utilizes advance appropriations to the Medicare Improvement Fund to provide states with an approved Plan up to 50 percent of their state’s appropriated match to the Fund. Total funding to states cannot exceed 25 percent of the annual appropriation for the Nurse Corps Scholarship Program and the Nurse Corps Loan Repayment Program.