

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 215

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the education and training of allied health professionals in exchange for a service commitment, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 4, 2005

Mr. STEARNS (for himself and Mr. STRICKLAND) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the education and training of allied health professionals in exchange for a service commitment, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Allied Health Profes-
5 sions Reinvestment Act of 2005”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds as follows:

1 (1) The Bureau of the Census, the Institute of
2 Medicine, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and State
3 hospital associations highlight the increased demand
4 for acute and chronic health care services among
5 both the general population and a rapidly growing
6 aging portion of the population.

7 (2) The calls for reduction in medical errors, in-
8 creased patient safety, and increased quality of care
9 have resulted in an amplified call for allied health
10 professionals to provide health care services.

11 (3) Several allied health professions are charac-
12 terized by workforce shortages, declining enrollments
13 in allied health education programs, or a combina-
14 tion of both factors, and hospital officials have re-
15 ported vacancy rates in positions occupied by allied
16 health professionals.

17 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

18 Section 799B of the Public Health Service Act (42
19 U.S.C. 295p) is amended—

20 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through
21 (11) as paragraphs (6) through (12), respectively;
22 and

23 (2) by inserting after paragraph (4) the fol-
24 lowing:

1 “(5) The term ‘allied health profession’ means
 2 any profession practiced by an individual in his or
 3 her capacity as an allied health professional.”.

4 **SEC. 4. ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS.**

5 (a) AMENDMENT.—Title VII of the Public Health
 6 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 292 et seq.) is amended—

7 (1) by redesignating part F as part G; and

8 (2) by adding after part E the following:

9 **“PART F—ALLIED HEALTH**

10 **“SEC. 780. PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and
 12 issue public service announcements that advertise and pro-
 13 mote the allied health professions, highlight the advan-
 14 tages and rewards of the allied health professions, and en-
 15 courage individuals to enter the allied health professions.

16 “(b) METHOD.—The public service announcements
 17 described in subsection (a) shall be broadcast through ap-
 18 propriate media outlets, including television or radio, and
 19 other methods approved by the Secretary in a manner in-
 20 tended to reach as wide and diverse an audience as pos-
 21 sible.

22 **“SEC. 780A. STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AN-**
 23 **NOUNCEMENTS.**

24 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants
 25 to eligible entities to support State and local advertising

1 campaigns through appropriate media outlets to promote
2 the allied health professions and highlight the advantages
3 and rewards of the allied health professions.

4 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
5 a grant under subsection (a) shall use funds received
6 through such grant to acquire local television and radio
7 time, place advertisements in local newspapers, or post in-
8 formation on billboards or on the Internet in a manner
9 intended to reach as wide and diverse an audience as pos-
10 sible, in order to—

11 “(1) advertise and promote the allied health
12 professions;

13 “(2) promote allied health professions education
14 programs;

15 “(3) inform the public of financial assistance
16 regarding such education programs;

17 “(4) highlight individuals in the community who
18 are practicing allied health professions in order to
19 recruit new allied health professionals; or

20 “(5) provide any other information to recruit
21 individuals for the allied health professions.

22 “(c) LIMITATION.—An eligible entity that receives a
23 grant under subsection (a) shall not use funds received
24 through such grant to advertise particular employment op-
25 portunities.

1 “(d) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—For purposes of this sec-
2 tion, the term ‘eligible entity’ means an entity that is—

3 “(1) a professional, national, or State allied
4 health association;

5 “(2) a State health care provider; or

6 “(3) an association of entities that are each a
7 health care facility, an allied health education pro-
8 gram, or an entity that provides similar services or
9 serves a like function.

10 **“SEC. 780B. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.**

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may carry out a
12 program of entering into contracts with eligible individuals
13 under which such individuals agree to serve as allied
14 health professionals for the period described in subsection
15 (e) at a health care facility with a critical shortage of allied
16 health professionals, in consideration of the Federal Gov-
17 ernment agreeing to provide to the individuals scholar-
18 ships for the cost of tuition at schools of allied health in
19 allied health professions curricula.

20 “(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this
21 section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means an individual
22 who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a full-time
23 or part-time student in a school of allied health.

24 “(c) SELECTION.—In awarding scholarships under
25 this section, the Secretary shall select a range of full-time

1 and part-time students enrolled in a certificate, associate,
2 bachelor's, or graduate program.

3 “(d) AMOUNT.—The amount of a scholarship to an
4 eligible individual under this section may not exceed
5 \$10,000 for any academic year.

6 “(e) SERVICE REQUIREMENT.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not
8 enter into a contract with an eligible individual
9 under this section unless the individual agrees to
10 serve as an allied health professional at a health
11 care facility with a critical shortage of allied health
12 professionals for a period of full-time service of not
13 less than 1 year for each academic year for which
14 the individual receives a scholarship under this sec-
15 tion, or for a period of part-time service in accord-
16 ance with paragraph (2).

17 “(2) PART-TIME SERVICE.—An individual may
18 complete the period of service described in para-
19 graph (1) on a part-time basis if the individual has
20 a written agreement that—

21 “(A) is entered into by the facility and the
22 individual and is approved by the Secretary;
23 and

24 “(B) provides that the period of obligated
25 service will be extended so that the aggregate

1 amount of service performed will equal the
2 amount of service that would be performed
3 through a period of full-time service described
4 in paragraph (1).

5 “(f) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.—The
6 provisions of subpart III of part D of title III shall, except
7 as inconsistent with this section, apply to the program es-
8 tablished in this section in the same manner and to the
9 same extent as such provisions apply to the National
10 Health Service Corps Scholarship Program established in
11 such subpart.

12 “(g) REPORTS.—Not later than 18 months after the
13 date of the enactment of this section, and annually there-
14 after, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the Con-
15 gress a report describing the program carried out under
16 this section, including statements regarding—

17 “(1) the number of enrollees, scholarships, and
18 grant recipients;

19 “(2) the number of graduates;

20 “(3) the amount of scholarship payments made;

21 “(4) which educational institution the recipients
22 attended;

23 “(5) the number and placement location of the
24 scholarship recipients at health care facilities with a
25 critical shortage of allied health professionals;

- 1 “(6) the default rate and actions required;
- 2 “(7) the amount of outstanding default funds of
- 3 the scholarship program;
- 4 “(8) to the extent that it can be determined,
- 5 the reason for the default;
- 6 “(9) the demographics of the individuals par-
- 7 ticipating in the scholarship program; and
- 8 “(10) an evaluation of the overall costs and
- 9 benefits of the program.

10 **“SEC. 780C. ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION,**
11 **PRACTICE, AND RETENTION GRANTS.**

12 “(a) EDUCATION PRIORITY AREAS.—The Secretary
13 may award grants to, and enter into contracts with, eligi-
14 ble entities for—

- 15 “(1) expanding the enrollment in allied health
- 16 professions programs;
- 17 “(2) developing and implementing internship
- 18 and residency programs to encourage mentoring and
- 19 the development of specialties and training for new
- 20 or emerging public health needs;
- 21 “(3) providing education in new technologies,
- 22 including distance learning methodologies; or
- 23 “(4) developing grant awards to colleges and
- 24 universities to promote development of bachelor’s,

1 master's, and doctoral degree programs for allied
2 health professions faculty.

3 “(b) PRACTICE PRIORITY AREAS.—The Secretary
4 may award grants to, and enter into contracts with, eligi-
5 ble entities for—

6 “(1) establishing or expanding allied health pro-
7 fessions practice arrangements in noninstitutional
8 settings to demonstrate methods to improve access
9 to primary health care in medically underserved
10 communities;

11 “(2) providing care for underserved populations
12 and other high-risk groups and individuals with
13 chronic conditions;

14 “(3) providing managed care, quality improve-
15 ment, and other skills needed to practice in existing
16 and emerging organized health care systems; or

17 “(4) developing cultural competencies among al-
18 lied health professionals.

19 “(c) RETENTION PRIORITY AREAS.—The Secretary
20 may award grants to, and enter into contracts with, eligi-
21 ble entities to enhance the allied health professions work-
22 force by initiating and maintaining allied health profession
23 retention programs—

24 “(1) to promote career advancement for allied
25 health professions personnel in a variety of training

1 settings, including cross training or specialty train-
2 ing among diverse population groups; or

3 “(2) to assist individuals in obtaining education
4 and training required to enter the allied health pro-
5 fessions and advance within such professions, such
6 as by providing career counseling and mentoring.

7 “(d) OTHER PRIORITY AREAS.—The Secretary may
8 award grants to, and enter into contracts with, eligible en-
9 tities—

10 “(1) to study and advance the measurement of
11 health outcomes relevant to the allied health profes-
12 sions; or

13 “(2) to address other issues that are of high
14 priority to allied health professional education, prac-
15 tice, and retention, as determined by the Secretary.

16 “(e) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the
17 Congress before the end of each fiscal year a report on
18 the grants awarded and the contracts entered into under
19 this section. Each such report shall identify the overall
20 number of such grants and contracts and provide an ex-
21 planation of why each such grant or contract will meet
22 the priority need of the workforce.

23 “(f) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—For purposes of this sec-
24 tion, the term ‘eligible entity’ includes a school of allied

1 health, a health care facility, or a partnership of such a
2 school and a facility.

3 **“SEC. 780D. COMPREHENSIVE GERIATRIC EDUCATION.**

4 “(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may
5 award grants to eligible entities to develop and implement,
6 in coordination with programs under section 753, pro-
7 grams and initiatives to train and educate allied health
8 professionals in providing geriatric care for the elderly.

9 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
10 a grant under subsection (a) shall use funds under such
11 grant to—

12 “(1) provide training to allied health profes-
13 sionals who will provide geriatric care for the elderly;

14 “(2) disseminate curricula relating to the treat-
15 ment of the health problems of elderly individuals;

16 “(3) train allied health professions faculty
17 members in geriatrics; or

18 “(4) provide continuing education to allied
19 health professionals who provide geriatric care.

20 “(c) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity desiring a
21 grant under subsection (a) shall submit an application to
22 the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and con-
23 taining such information as the Secretary may reasonably
24 require.

1 “(d) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—For purposes of this sec-
 2 tion, the term ‘eligible entity’ includes a school of allied
 3 health, a health care facility, or a partnership of such a
 4 program and facility.

5 **“SEC. 780E. ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS FACULTY LOAN**
 6 **PROGRAM.**

7 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary, acting
 8 through the Administrator of the Health Resources and
 9 Services Administration, may enter into an agreement
 10 with any institution of higher education for the establish-
 11 ment and operation of a student loan fund in accordance
 12 with this section, to increase the number of qualified allied
 13 health professions faculty.

14 “(b) AGREEMENTS.—Each agreement entered into
 15 under this section shall—

16 “(1) provide for the establishment of a student
 17 loan fund by the institution of higher education in-
 18 volved;

19 “(2) provide for deposit in the fund of—

20 “(A) the Federal capital contributions to
 21 the fund;

22 “(B) an amount equal to not less than
 23 one-ninth of such Federal capital contributions,
 24 contributed by such institution;

1 “(C) collections of principal and interest
2 on loans made from the fund; and

3 “(D) any other earnings of the fund;

4 “(3) provide that the fund will be used only for
5 loans to students of the institution in accordance
6 with subsection (c) and for costs of collection of such
7 loans and interest thereon;

8 “(4) provide that loans may be made from such
9 fund only to students pursuing a full-time course of
10 study or, at the discretion of the Secretary, a part-
11 time course of study in an allied health profession;
12 and

13 “(5) contain such other provisions as are nec-
14 essary to protect the financial interests of the
15 United States.

16 “(c) LOAN PROVISIONS.—Loans from any student
17 loan fund established by an institution of higher education
18 pursuant to an agreement under this section shall be made
19 to an individual on such terms and conditions as the insti-
20 tution may determine, except that—

21 “(1) such terms and conditions are subject to
22 any conditions, limitations, and requirements pre-
23 scribed by the Secretary;

24 “(2) in the case of any individual, the total of
25 the loans for any academic year made by institutions

1 of higher education from loan funds established pur-
2 suant to agreements under this section may not ex-
3 ceed \$30,000, plus any amount determined by the
4 Secretary on an annual basis to reflect inflation;

5 “(3) an amount up to 85 percent of any such
6 loan (plus interest thereon) shall be canceled by the
7 institution as follows:

8 “(A) upon completion by the individual of
9 each of the first, second, and third year of full-
10 time employment, required by the loan agree-
11 ment entered into under this section, as a fac-
12 ulty member in a school of allied health, the in-
13 stitution shall cancel 20 percent of the principle
14 of, and the interest on, the amount of such loan
15 unpaid on the first day of such employment;
16 and

17 “(B) upon completion by the individual of
18 the fourth year of full-time employment, re-
19 quired by the loan agreement entered into
20 under this section, as a faculty member in a
21 school of allied health, the institution shall can-
22 cel 25 percent of the principle of, and the inter-
23 est on, the amount of such loan unpaid on the
24 first day of such employment;

1 “(4) such a loan may be used to pay the cost
2 of tuition, fees, books, laboratory expenses, and
3 other reasonable education expenses;

4 “(5) such a loan shall be repayable in equal or
5 graduated periodic installments (with the right of
6 the borrower to accelerate repayment) over the 10-
7 year period that begins 9 months after the individual
8 ceases to pursue a course of study at a school of al-
9 lied health; and

10 “(6) such a loan shall—

11 “(A) beginning on the date that is 3
12 months after the individual ceases to pursue a
13 course of study at a school of allied health, bear
14 interest on the unpaid balance of the loan at
15 the rate of 3 percent per annum; or

16 “(B) subject to subsection (e), if the insti-
17 tution determines that the individual will not
18 complete such course of study or serve as a fac-
19 ulty member as required under the loan agree-
20 ment under this section, bear interest on the
21 unpaid balance of the loan at the prevailing
22 market rate.

23 “(d) PAYMENT OF PROPORTIONATE SHARE.—Where
24 all or any part of a loan, or interest, is canceled under
25 this section, the Secretary shall pay to the institution of

1 higher education an amount equal to the school's propor-
 2 tionate share of the canceled portion, as determined by
 3 the Secretary.

4 “(e) REVIEW BY SECRETARY.—At the request of the
 5 individual involved, the Secretary may review any deter-
 6 mination by an institution of higher education under sub-
 7 section (c)(6)(B).

8 “(f) PUBLICATION.—The Secretary shall publish in
 9 the Federal Register the name of each institution of high-
 10 er education participating in the allied health professions
 11 faculty loan program under this section.

12 **“SEC. 780F. GENERAL PROVISIONS.**

13 “(a) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this part:

14 “(1) The term ‘health care facility’ has the
 15 meaning given to that term under section 801 and
 16 includes any health care facility of the Veterans
 17 Health Administration.

18 “(2) The term ‘institution of higher education’
 19 has the meaning given to that term in section 101
 20 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

21 “(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
 22 carry out this part, there is authorized to be appropriated
 23 \$28,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009.”.

1 **SEC. 5. COUNCIL ON HEALTH PROFESSION EDUCATION.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish
3 in the Health Resources and Service Administration a
4 council to be known as the “Council on Health Profession
5 Education”.

6 (b) DUTIES.—The Council on Health Profession
7 Education shall monitor the status of the allied health pro-
8 fessions workforce and make annual reports to the Con-
9 gress.

10 **SEC. 6. REPORTS BY GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE.**

11 (a) NATIONAL VARIATIONS.—Not later than 4 years
12 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comp-
13 troller General of the United States shall—

14 (1) conduct a survey to determine national vari-
15 ations in the allied health professions at hospitals,
16 nursing homes, home health agencies, ambulatory
17 rehabilitation services, and other health care pro-
18 viders; and

19 (2) submit a report to the Congress on the re-
20 sults of such survey, including findings and rec-
21 ommendations on Federal remedies to ease allied
22 health profession shortages.

23 (b) ALLIED HEALTH PROGRAMS.—Not later than 4
24 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
25 Comptroller General of the United States shall—

1 (1) conduct an evaluation of whether the effec-
2 tiveness of programs authorized under this Act, in-
3 cluding whether such programs have demonstrably
4 increased the number of applicants to schools of al-
5 lied health; and

6 (2) submit a report to the Congress on the re-
7 sults of such evaluation.

8 **SEC. 7. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.**

9 Subparagraph (A) of section 736(g)(1) of the Public
10 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 293(g)(1)) is amended by
11 inserting “a school of allied health,” after “a school of
12 pharmacy,”.

○