

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2705

To authorize programs to increase the number of nurses within the Armed Forces through assistance for service as nurse faculty or education as nurses, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 5, 2008

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. REED, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. DOLE, and Mr. INOUE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To authorize programs to increase the number of nurses within the Armed Forces through assistance for service as nurse faculty or education as nurses, 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 “Troops to Nurse
5 Teachers Act of 2008”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROGRAMS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF NURSES**
2 **WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense may
4 provide for the carrying out of each of the programs de-
5 scribed in subsections (b) through (f).

6 (b) SERVICE OF NURSE OFFICERS AS FACULTY IN
7 EXCHANGE FOR COMMITMENT TO ADDITIONAL SERVICE
8 IN THE ARMED FORCES.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under
10 this section may be a program in which covered com-
11 missioned officers with a graduate degree in nursing
12 or a related field who are in the nurse corps of the
13 Armed Force concerned serve a tour of duty of two
14 years as a full-time faculty member of an accredited
15 school of nursing.

16 (2) COVERED OFFICERS.—A commissioned offi-
17 cer of the nurse corps of the Armed Forces de-
18 scribed in this paragraph is a nurse officer on active
19 duty who has served for more than nine years on ac-
20 tive duty in the Armed Forces as an officer of the
21 nurse corps at the time of the commencement of the
22 tour of duty described in paragraph (1).

23 (3) BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES.—An officer
24 serving on the faculty of an accredited school or
25 nursing under this subsection shall be accorded all
26 the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities (other

1 than compensation and compensation-related bene-
 2 fits) of any other comparably situated individual
 3 serving a full-time faculty member of such school.

4 (4) AGREEMENT FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICE.—

5 Each officer who serves a tour of duty on the faculty
 6 of a school of nursing under this subsection shall
 7 enter into an agreement with the Secretary to serve
 8 upon the completion of such tour of duty for a pe-
 9 riod of four years for such tour of duty as a member
 10 of the nurse corps of the Armed Force concerned.

11 Any service agreed to by an officer under this para-
 12 graph is in addition to any other service required of
 13 the officer under law.

14 (c) SERVICE OF NURSE OFFICERS AS FACULTY IN
 15 EXCHANGE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NURSE OFFICER
 16 CANDIDATES.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under
 18 this section may be a program in which commis-
 19 sioned officers with a graduate degree in nursing or
 20 a related field who are in the nurse corps of the
 21 Armed Force concerned serve while on active duty a
 22 tour of duty of two years as a full-time faculty mem-
 23 ber of an accredited school of nursing.

24 (2) BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES.—An officer
 25 serving on the faculty of an accredited school of

1 nursing under this subsection shall be accorded all
2 the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities (other
3 than compensation and compensation-related bene-
4 fits) of any other comparably situated individual
5 serving as a full-time faculty member of such school.

6 (3) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NURSE OFFICER CAN-
7 DIDATES.—(A) Each accredited school of nursing at
8 which an officer serves on the faculty under this
9 subsection shall provide scholarships to individuals
10 undertaking an educational program at such school
11 leading to a degree in nursing who agree, upon com-
12 pletion of such program, to accept a commission as
13 an officer in the nurse corps of the Armed Forces.

14 (B) The total amount of funds made available
15 for scholarships by an accredited school of nursing
16 under subparagraph (A) for each officer serving on
17 the faculty of that school under this subsection shall
18 be not less than the amount equal to an entry-level
19 full-time faculty member of that school for each year
20 that such officer so serves on the faculty of that
21 school.

22 (C) The total number of scholarships provided
23 by an accredited school of nursing under subpara-
24 graph (A) for each officer serving on the faculty of
25 that school under this subsection shall be such num-

1 ber as the Secretary of Defense shall specify for pur-
2 poses of this subsection.

3 (d) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CERTAIN NURSE OFFICERS
4 FOR EDUCATION AS NURSES.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under
6 this section may be a program in which the Sec-
7 retary provides scholarships to commissioned officers
8 of the nurse corps of the Armed Force concerned de-
9 scribed in paragraph (2) who enter into an agree-
10 ment described in paragraph (4) for the participa-
11 tion of such officers in an educational program of an
12 accredited school of nursing leading to a graduate
13 degree in nursing.

14 (2) COVERED NURSE OFFICERS.—A commis-
15 sioned officer of the nurse corps of the Armed
16 Forces described in this paragraph is a nurse officer
17 who has served not less than 20 years on active duty
18 in the Armed Forces and is otherwise eligible for re-
19 tirement from the Armed Forces.

20 (3) SCOPE OF SCHOLARSHIPS.—Amounts in a
21 scholarship provided a nurse officer under this sub-
22 section may be utilized by the officer to pay the
23 costs of tuition, fees, and other educational expenses
24 of the officer in participating in an educational pro-
25 gram described in paragraph (1).

1 (4) AGREEMENT.—An agreement of a nurse of-
2 ficer described in this paragraph is the agreement of
3 the officer—

4 (A) to participate in an educational pro-
5 gram described in paragraph (1); and

6 (B) upon graduation from such educational
7 program—

8 (i) to serve not less than two years as
9 a full-time faculty member of an accredited
10 school of nursing; and

11 (ii) to undertake such activities as the
12 Secretary considers appropriate to encour-
13 age current and prospective nurses to pur-
14 sue service in the nurse corps of the
15 Armed Forces.

16 (e) TRANSITION ASSISTANCE FOR RETIRING NURSE
17 OFFICERS QUALIFIED AS FACULTY.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under
19 this section may be a program in which the Sec-
20 retary provides to commissioned officers of the nurse
21 corps of the Armed Force concerned described in
22 paragraph (2) the assistance described in paragraph
23 (3) to assist such officers in obtaining and fulfilling
24 positions as full-time faculty members of an accred-

1 ited school of nursing after retirement from the
2 Armed Forces.

3 (2) COVERED NURSE OFFICERS.—A commis-
4 sioned officer of the nurse corps of the Armed
5 Forces described in this paragraph is a nurse officer
6 who—

7 (A) has served an aggregate of at least 20
8 years on active duty or in reserve active status
9 in the Armed Forces;

10 (B) is eligible for retirement from the
11 Armed Forces; and

12 (C) possesses a doctoral or master degree
13 in nursing or a related field which qualifies the
14 nurse officer to discharge the position of nurse
15 instructor at an accredited school of nursing.

16 (3) ASSISTANCE.—The assistance described in
17 this paragraph is assistance as follows:

18 (A) Career placement assistance.

19 (B) Continuing education.

20 (C) Stipends (in an amount specified by
21 the Secretary).

22 (4) AGREEMENT.—A nurse officer provided as-
23 sistance under this subsection shall enter into an
24 agreement with the Secretary to serve as a full-time
25 faculty member of an accredited school of nursing

1 for such period as the Secretary shall provide in the
 2 agreement.

3 (f) BENEFITS FOR RETIRED NURSE OFFICERS AC-
 4 CEPTING APPOINTMENT AS FACULTY.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under
 6 this section may be a program in which the Sec-
 7 retary provides to any individual described in para-
 8 graph (2) the benefits specified in paragraph (3).

9 (2) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—An individual de-
 10 scribed in this paragraph is an individual who—

11 (A) is retired from the Armed Forces after
 12 service as a commissioned officer in the nurse
 13 corps of the Armed Forces;

14 (B) holds a graduate degree in nursing;
 15 and

16 (C) serves as a full-time faculty member of
 17 an accredited school of nursing.

18 (3) BENEFITS.—The benefits specified in this
 19 paragraph shall include the following:

20 (A) Payment of retired or retirement pay
 21 without reduction based on receipt of pay or
 22 other compensation from the institution of
 23 higher education concerned.

24 (B) Payment by the institution of higher
 25 education concerned of a salary and other com-

1 pensation to which other similarly situated fac-
 2 ulty members of the institution of higher edu-
 3 cation would be entitled.

4 (C) If the amount of pay and other com-
 5 pensation payable by the institution of higher
 6 education concerned for service as an associate
 7 full-time faculty member is less than the basic
 8 pay to which the individual was entitled imme-
 9 diately before retirement from the Armed
 10 Forces, payment of an amount equal to the dif-
 11 ference between such basic pay and such pay-
 12 ment and other compensation.

13 (g) ADMINISTRATION AND DURATION OF PRO-
 14 GRAMS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
 16 requirements and procedures for the administration
 17 of the programs authorized by this section. Such re-
 18 quirements and procedures shall include procedures
 19 for selecting participating schools of nursing.

20 (2) DURATION.—Any program carried out
 21 under this section shall continue for not less than
 22 two years.

23 (3) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than two years
 24 after commencing any program under this section,
 25 the Secretary shall assess the results of such pro-

1 gram and determine whether or not to continue such
2 program. The assessment of any program shall be
3 based on measurable criteria, information concerning
4 results, and such other matters as the Secretary
5 considers appropriate.

6 (4) CONTINUATION.—The Secretary may con-
7 tinue carrying out any program under this section
8 that the Secretary determines, pursuant to an as-
9 sessment under paragraph (3), to continue to carry
10 out. In continuing to carry out a program, the Sec-
11 retary may modify the terms of the program within
12 the scope of this section. The continuation of any
13 program may include its expansion to include addi-
14 tional participating schools of nursing.

15 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “school
16 of nursing” and “accredited” have the meaning given
17 those terms in section 801 of the Public Health Service
18 Act (42 U.S.C. 296).

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