

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3943

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide loan repayment incentives for physician assistants, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 5, 2015

Ms. BASS 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 loan repayment incentives for physician assistants, 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 “Physician Assistant
5 Education Public Health Initiatives Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT FOR CERTAIN PHYSI-**
7 **CIAN ASSISTANTS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Part C of title VII of the Public
9 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 293k et seq.) is amended
10 by adding at the end the following:

“Subpart III—Physician Assistants

**“SEC. 749C. FACULTY POSITIONS IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
EDUCATION PROGRAM LOAN REPAYMENT.**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—

“(1) CONTRACTS.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary shall enter into contracts with eligible individuals under which such an individual agrees to serve as a full-time member of the faculty at a graduate-level physician assistant education program (as defined in section 799B) in consideration of the Federal Government agreeing to pay, for each year of such service, at the end of each such year, not more than \$10,000 of the principal and interest of the educational loans of such individual.

“(2) CAP.—The Secretary may not pay more than \$45,000 under this section for any individual.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—

“(1) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—In this section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means an individual who—

“(A) is a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident of the United States;

“(B) has a degree from a graduate-level physician assistant education program;

“(C) has contracted with a graduate-level physician assistant education program to serve

1 as a member of the faculty for not less than 2
2 years; and

3 “(D) either—

4 “(i) holds a license as a physician as-
5 sistant; or

6 “(ii) is qualified for licensure as a
7 physician assistant in a State where such
8 individual serves as a full-time member of
9 the faculty at a graduate-level physician
10 assistant education program.

11 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
12 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
13 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
14 2017 through 2021.

15 **“SEC. 749D. PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PRIMARY CARE PRO-**
16 **VIDER LOAN REPAYMENT.**

17 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into
18 contracts with eligible individuals under which such an in-
19 dividual agrees to serve for at least 2 years as a full-time
20 physician assistant in a health professional shortage area,
21 in a medically underserved area, or at a health center in
22 consideration of the Federal Government agreeing to pay
23 the eligible amount of the principal and interest of the
24 educational loans of such individual.

25 “(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 “(1) ELIGIBLE AMOUNT.—The term ‘eligible
2 amount’ means, with respect to an eligible individual
3 who has entered into a contract under subsection
4 (a), with respect to the aggregate principal and in-
5 terest on educational loans of such individual out-
6 standing on the date such individual began the serv-
7 ice described in such contract—

8 “(A) for each of the first two years of serv-
9 ice under such contract, 30 percent of such ag-
10 gregate principal and interest; and

11 “(B) for the third year, if any, of service
12 under such contract, 25 percent of such aggre-
13 gate principal and interest.

14 “(2) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term ‘eligible
15 individual’ means an individual who—

16 “(A) is a citizen, national, or lawful per-
17 manent resident of the United States;

18 “(B) has a degree from a graduate-level
19 physician assistant education program; and

20 “(C) has contracted with a health care pro-
21 vider located in a health professional shortage
22 area or a medically underserved area or with a
23 health center to serve as a physician assistant
24 for not less than 2 years.

1 “(3) HEALTH CENTER.—The term ‘health cen-
 2 ter’ has the meaning given such term in section
 3 330(a).

4 “(4) MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED AREA.—The
 5 term ‘medically underserved area’ has the meaning
 6 given the term ‘medically underserved community’ in
 7 section 799B(6).

8 “(5) HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE
 9 AREA.—The term ‘health professional shortage area’
 10 has the meaning given such term in section 332(a).

11 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
 12 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
 13 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
 14 2017 through 2021.”.

15 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
 16 this section shall apply with respect to service occurring
 17 on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

18 **SEC. 3. EXTENDING AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS**
 19 **TO SUPPORT FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND**
 20 **DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS.**

21 Section 740 of the Public Health Service Act (42
 22 U.S.C. 293d) is amended—

23 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting after “2014”
 24 the following: “and each of the fiscal years 2017
 25 through 2021”;

1 (2) in subsection (b), by inserting after “2014”
2 the following: “and such sums as may be necessary
3 for each of the fiscal years 2017 through 2021”; and
4 (3) in subsection (c), by inserting after “2014”
5 the following: “and each of the fiscal years 2017
6 through 2021”.

7 **SEC. 4. REAUTHORIZATION OF PRIMARY CARE TRAINING**
8 **AND ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS.**

9 Section 747(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42
10 U.S.C. 293k(c)) is amended—

11 (1) in paragraph (1), by inserting after “2014”
12 the following: “and each of fiscal years 2017
13 through 2021”; and

14 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “Fifteen” and
15 inserting “At least 15”.

16 **SEC. 5. GRANTS FOR RESEARCH ON PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT**
17 **EDUCATION.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
19 Human Services shall provide grants to eligible entities to
20 fund eligible researchers to increase research on physician
21 assistant education.

22 (b) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity desiring a grant
23 under this section shall submit to the Secretary an appli-
24 cation at such time, in such manner, and containing such
25 information as the Secretary may require.

1 (c) CONDITION OF RECEIPT.—As a condition of re-
2 ceipt of a grant under this section, an entity shall each
3 year award not fewer than eight eligible researchers funds
4 to support physician assistant education research.

5 (d) REPORT REQUIREMENT.—An entity receiving a
6 grant under this section shall provide to the Secretary
7 with respect to each year that such entity receives funds
8 under this section a report on the activities conducted
9 using such funds, including—

10 (1) the number of researchers supported during
11 such year by such entity using such funds;

12 (2) a list of the researchers counted under
13 paragraph (1), organized by researcher, including—

14 (A) the institution such researcher is affili-
15 ated with; and

16 (B) the research topic of such researcher;

17 (3) citations to published clinical and scientific
18 research by researchers described in paragraph (1)
19 that is attributable to support under this section;

20 (4) an evaluation of the benefits of grants
21 under this section; and

22 (5) any other information the Secretary may re-
23 quest.

24 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
2 ty” means an organization that—

3 (A) is a non-profit organization; and

4 (B) has demonstrated expertise in physi-
5 cian assistant education and faculty develop-
6 ment.

7 (2) ELIGIBLE RESEARCHER.—The term “eligi-
8 ble researcher” means, with respect to an eligible en-
9 tity, a researcher that—

10 (A) has demonstrated expertise in physi-
11 cian assistant education and faculty develop-
12 ment; and

13 (B) at such time and in such manner as
14 such entity may require, provides such entity
15 with a research proposal on improving physician
16 assistant education and faculty development.

17 (3) PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION.—The
18 term “physician assistant education” means select-
19 ing, educating, and graduating students in accred-
20 ited graduate physician assistant educational pro-
21 grams.

22 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
23 the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

24 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
25 are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be

- 1 necessary to carry out this section for each of fiscal years
- 2 2017 through 2021.

