

SENATE BILL NO. 20

BY SENATOR MCMATH

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

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AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 46:1131, 1133 through 1138, 1140, and 1141, and to repeal Chapter 10-C of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 46:1151 through 1162, relative to hospital service districts scholarship programs; to provide for scholarship programs for certain healthcare professionals; to provide for eligibility; to provide for application and evaluation procedures; to provide for disbursements; to provide for scholarship contracts; to provide for failure to comply penalties and repayment procedures; to repeal scholarship programs for certain healthcare professionals; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 46:1131, 1133 through 1138, 1140, and 1141 are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

CHAPTER 10-B. NURSING AND ALLIED HEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

§1131. Parish hospitals and hospital service districts; nursing and allied health scholarship program; establishment, administration, funding

A. The board of commissioners of each hospital or hospital service district, hereinafter referred to as the board or the board of commissioners, is authorized to establish and administer a ~~nursing~~ scholarship program for the purpose of increasing the educational opportunities available to nursing and allied health students who will practice ~~nursing~~ in an area of the hospital district approved by the board of commissioners. Each board which establishes ~~such~~ a program may award ~~nursing~~ scholarships to ~~residents or former residents of the hospital service district who otherwise qualify~~; individuals who are admitted or engaged in the study of nursing or allied health at an accredited school of nursing or allied health ~~located in this~~

1 state, and who contract to practice nursing or an allied health profession in the
 2 district or parish, as provided in this Chapter. Each scholarship shall be awarded for
 3 the purpose of defraying the costs of tuition, ~~fees~~, and other related expenses and cost
 4 for attendance at nursing or allied health school. The board may, at any time and in
 5 its discretion, determine not to grant a scholarship under the program.

6 B. ~~Any program established under the~~ The provisions of this Chapter shall
 7 ~~be wholly funded by~~ apply solely to monies generated by the respective boards
 8 through their facilities, and upon the initiation of such a program, the program shall
 9 become a part of the annual hospital budget.

10 C. For the purpose of this Chapter, the ~~term "nursing" shall mean~~ following
 11 definitions shall apply:

12 (1) "Allied health" means any generally recognized medical profession
 13 or vocation including but not limited to occupational, respiratory, vocational,
 14 physical, and other therapies; medical, radiologic, and other technologists;
 15 pharmacists, social workers, athletic trainers, and other similar professions and
 16 vocations.

17 (2) "Nursing" means professional nursing as practiced by an individual who
 18 has graduated from an accredited school of nursing, passed the licensing
 19 examination, and been issued a license to practice as a registered nurse in this state
 20 by the Louisiana State Board of Nursing or a license to practice as a practical
 21 nurse in this state by the Louisiana State Board of Practical Nurse Examiners.

22 * * *

23 §1133. Eligibility for scholarships

24 Any ~~United States citizen and resident of the state of Louisiana,~~ individual
 25 who is admitted to or is engaged in the study of nursing or allied health at an
 26 accredited school of nursing or allied health located in ~~this state~~ the United States,
 27 and who intends to practice nursing or allied health in an area of the parish hospital
 28 or hospital service district where there is a shortage of nurses or allied health
 29 professionals shall be eligible to apply ~~to the board of commissioners of the parish~~
 30 ~~hospital or hospital service district in the parish or district in which the applicant~~

1 ~~resides or once resided~~ for a scholarship in accordance with the provisions of this
 2 Chapter. ~~Such~~ **The** application shall be in writing and in ~~such~~ **the** form as the board
 3 may require. It shall contain the written statement of the applicant that he intends to
 4 practice nursing **or an allied health profession** ~~in the parish or district, as the case~~
 5 ~~may be,~~ **an area approved by the board of commissioners** if he is selected to
 6 receive the scholarship.

7 §1134. Application consideration; evaluation

8 ~~It shall be the duty of the board~~ **The board** of commissioners, **or its**
 9 **designee, to shall** receive, consider, evaluate, and allow or disallow all applications
 10 for scholarships made by eligible applicants. The board of commissioners, **or its**
 11 **designee,** shall ~~make careful and~~ **conduct a** full investigation of the ability and
 12 qualifications of each applicant. The board of commissioners shall provide that an
 13 affirmative action program for the selection of recipients be established which shall
 14 include that no discrimination occur on the basis of race, creed, sex, age, or ethnic
 15 origin. The board of commissioners shall establish and publish rules on the selection
 16 process of the recipient which shall preclude the appearance of and the possibility
 17 of nepotism. The board of commissioners shall notify each applicant selected to
 18 receive a scholarship of his selection and shall also notify the dean of the nursing
 19 school or office of financial assistance at the school where the student is registered.

20 §1135. Funds disbursement for scholarships

21 Funds for the scholarship awarded ~~as herein provided~~ **pursuant to this**
 22 **Chapter** shall be forwarded by the board of commissioners to the dean of the school
 23 of nursing **or allied health** to which the recipient has been admitted or is engaged
 24 in the study of nursing **or allied health,** upon the warrant of the dean or chief fiscal
 25 administrator for the amount fixed in the warrant ~~and~~ **or** shall be payable to the
 26 scholarship recipient designated ~~thereon~~ **on the warrant where applicable.** ~~Said~~
 27 ~~warrant upon presentation shall be~~ **All amounts** paid by the board of commissioners
 28 **shall be** out of funds budgeted by ~~said~~ **the** board for ~~the~~ **that** purpose.

29 §1136. Contract for scholarship; contingent

30 Any applicant selected by the board of commissioners to receive a

1 scholarship shall enter into a contract with the board, which shall be deemed a
 2 contract formed within the state of Louisiana, agreeing to the terms and conditions
 3 upon which the scholarship shall be granted to the applicant. The contract shall
 4 include ~~such~~ the terms and provisions as will execute the full purpose and intent of
 5 this scholarship program, including the purpose of providing nurses or allied health
 6 professionals who will practice ~~nursing~~ within an area of the hospital district. The
 7 form of the contract shall be prepared and approved by the attorney general of this
 8 state. The ~~chairman of the board of commissioners~~ president and chief executive
 9 officer, or equivalent, of the hospital or hospital service district shall sign the
 10 contract, ~~the vice-chairman of the board shall countersign it,~~ and the applicant shall
 11 ~~likewise~~ sign it. The board shall preserve and maintain the contract until ~~such time~~
 12 as the terms ~~thereof~~ are met or satisfied. A duplicate copy shall be transmitted to the
 13 applicant.

14 §1137. Return to practice; area designated; notification

15 A. ~~Within such time after~~ After the applicant has completed nursing or allied
 16 health school ~~as the board of commissioners shall provide by regulation,~~ the
 17 scholarship recipient shall return to the parish or hospital service district, as the case
 18 may be, to become a ~~full-time~~ full-time registered nurse or allied health
 19 professional on the staff of ~~the~~ hospital service district or in an area designated by
 20 the board of commissioners prior to the return. ~~For each one thousand dollars of~~
 21 ~~scholarship monies received from the hospital district, the recipient shall be~~
 22 ~~obligated to practice full time nursing for a period of six months up to a total not to~~
 23 ~~exceed thirty-six months of full time work as consideration for the nursing~~
 24 ~~scholarship awarded.~~

25 B. The board of commissioners shall inform the recipient of the designated
 26 area to be served by him one hundred twenty days prior to the date ~~of which time~~ the
 27 recipient is to commence practice in ~~such~~ the area.

28 §1138. Failure to comply; remittance; cancellation for death or permanent total
 29 disability

30 A. If the recipient fails to comply fully with any condition ~~as provided for by~~

