

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4016

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

MARCH 23, 2004

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 2004”.

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) ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSION.—The term
2 ‘allied health profession’ means any profession prac-
3 ticed by an individual in his or her capacity as an
4 allied health professional.”.

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

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

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

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

10 **“PART F—ALLIED HEALTH**

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

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

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

1 **“SEC. 780A. STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AN-**
2 **NOUNCEMENTS.**

3 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants
4 to eligible entities to support State and local advertising
5 campaigns through appropriate media outlets to promote
6 the allied health professions and highlight the advantages
7 and rewards of the allied health professions.

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

15 “(1) advertise and promote the allied health
16 professions;

17 “(2) promote allied health professions education
18 programs;

19 “(3) inform the public of financial assistance
20 regarding such education programs;

21 “(4) highlight individuals in the community who
22 are practicing allied health professions in order to
23 recruit new allied health professionals; or

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

1 “(c) LIMITATION.—An eligible entity that receives a
2 grant under subsection (a) shall not use funds received
3 through such grant to advertise particular employment op-
4 portunities.

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

7 “(1) a professional, national, or State allied
8 health association;

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

10 “(3) an association of entities that are each a
11 health care facility, an allied health education pro-
12 gram, or an entity that provides similar services or
13 serves a like function.

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

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

24 “(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this
25 section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means an individual

1 who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a full-time
2 or part-time student in a school of allied health.

3 “(c) SELECTION.—In awarding scholarships under
4 this section, the Secretary shall select a range of full-time
5 and part-time students enrolled in a certificate, associate,
6 bachelor’s, or graduate program.

7 “(d) AMOUNT.—The amount of a scholarship to an
8 eligible individual under this section may not exceed
9 \$10,000 for any academic year.

10 “(e) SERVICE REQUIREMENT.—

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

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

1 “(A) is entered into by the facility and the
2 individual and is approved by the Secretary;
3 and

4 “(B) provides that the period of obligated
5 service will be extended so that the aggregate
6 amount of service performed will equal the
7 amount of service that would be performed
8 through a period of full-time service described
9 in paragraph (1).

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

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

22 “(1) the number of enrollees, scholarships, and
23 grant recipients;

24 “(2) the number of graduates;

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

1 “(4) which educational institution the recipients
2 attended;

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

6 “(6) the default rate and actions required;

7 “(7) the amount of outstanding default funds of
8 the scholarship program;

9 “(8) to the extent that it can be determined,
10 the reason for the default;

11 “(9) the demographics of the individuals par-
12 ticipating in the scholarship program; and

13 “(10) an evaluation of the overall costs and
14 benefits of the program.

15 **“SEC. 780C. ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION,**
16 **PRACTICE, AND RETENTION GRANTS.**

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

20 “(1) expanding the enrollment in allied health
21 professions programs;

22 “(2) developing and implementing internship
23 and residency programs to encourage mentoring and
24 the development of specialties and training for new
25 or emerging public health needs;

1 “(3) providing education in new technologies,
2 including distance learning methodologies; or

3 “(4) developing grant awards to colleges and
4 universities to promote development of bachelor’s,
5 master’s, and doctoral degree programs for allied
6 health professions faculty.

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

10 “(1) establishing or expanding allied health pro-
11 fessions practice arrangements in noninstitutional
12 settings to demonstrate methods to improve access
13 to primary health care in medically underserved
14 communities;

15 “(2) providing care for underserved populations
16 and other high-risk groups and individuals with
17 chronic conditions;

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

21 “(4) developing cultural competencies among al-
22 lied health professionals.

23 “(c) RETENTION PRIORITY AREAS.—The Secretary
24 may award grants to, and enter into contracts with, eligi-
25 ble entities to enhance the allied health professions work-

1 force by initiating and maintaining allied health profession
2 retention programs—

3 “(1) to promote career advancement for allied
4 health professions personnel in a variety of training
5 settings, including cross training or specialty train-
6 ing among diverse population groups; or

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

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

14 “(1) to study and advance the measurement of
15 health outcomes relevant to the allied health profes-
16 sions; or

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

20 “(e) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the
21 Congress before the end of each fiscal year a report on
22 the grants awarded and the contracts entered into under
23 this section. Each such report shall identify the overall
24 number of such grants and contracts and provide an ex-

1 planation of why each such grant or contract will meet
2 the priority need of the workforce.

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

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

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

13 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
14 a grant under subsection (a) shall use funds under such
15 grant to—

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

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

20 “(3) train allied health professions faculty
21 members in geriatrics; or

22 “(4) provide continuing education to allied
23 health professionals who provide geriatric care.

24 “(c) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity desiring a
25 grant under subsection (a) shall submit an application to

1 the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and con-
2 taining such information as the Secretary may reasonably
3 require.

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

8 **“SEC. 780E. ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS FACULTY LOAN**
9 **PROGRAM.**

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

17 “(b) AGREEMENTS.—Each agreement entered into
18 under this section shall—

19 “(1) provide for the establishment of a student
20 loan fund by the institution of higher education in-
21 volved;

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

23 “(A) the Federal capital contributions to
24 the fund;

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

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

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

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

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

16 “(5) contain such other provisions as are nec-
17 essary to protect the financial interests of the
18 United States.

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

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

4 “(2) in the case of any individual, the total of
5 the loans for any academic year made by institutions
6 of higher education from loan funds established pur-
7 suant to agreements under this section may not ex-
8 ceed \$30,000, plus any amount determined by the
9 Secretary on an annual basis to reflect inflation;

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

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

22 “(B) upon completion by the individual of
23 the fourth year of full-time employment, re-
24 quired by the loan agreement entered into
25 under this section, as a faculty member in a

1 school of allied health, the institution shall can-
2 cel 25 percent of the principle of, and the inter-
3 est on, the amount of such loan unpaid on the
4 first day of such employment;

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

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

14 “(6) such a loan shall—

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

20 “(B) subject to subsection (e), if the insti-
21 tution determines that the individual will not
22 complete such course of study or serve as a fac-
23 ulty member as required under the loan agree-
24 ment under this section, bear interest on the

1 unpaid balance of the loan at the prevailing
2 market rate.

3 “(d) PAYMENT OF PROPORTIONATE SHARE.—Where
4 all or any part of a loan, or interest, is canceled under
5 this section, the Secretary shall pay to the institution of
6 higher education an amount equal to the school’s propor-
7 tionate share of the canceled portion, as determined by
8 the Secretary.

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

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

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

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

19 “(1) The term ‘health care facility’ has the
20 meaning given to that term under section 801 and
21 includes any health care facility of the Veterans
22 Health Administration.

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

1 “(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
2 carry out this part, there is authorized to be appropriated
3 \$28,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009.”.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11 **SEC. 7. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.**

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

○