



Rep. LaToya Greenwood

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10200HB4645ham001

LRB102 24527 CPF 36484 a

1 AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 4645

2 AMENDMENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_. Amend House Bill 4645 by replacing  
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Equity and Representation in Health Care Act.

6 Section 5. Findings; purpose.

7 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

8 (1) Every Illinois resident deserves access to high  
9 quality, affordable health care regardless of his or her  
10 race, ethnicity, zip code, gender identification, or  
11 sexual orientation. Moreover, Illinois residents deserve  
12 support from a strong, diverse health care workforce that  
13 reflects, represents, and understands the patients they  
14 serve.

15 (2) Establishing and building trusted relationships  
16 between patients and health care providers can lead to

1 more compassionate care and improved outcomes. This is  
2 particularly important for communities of color and  
3 populations that experience systemic racism and other  
4 barriers to obtaining equitable high quality care that  
5 improves health.

6 (3) A 2004 report from Johns Hopkins University and  
7 the Commonwealth Fund focused on the disparities in  
8 patient experience brought on by a lack of racial and  
9 ethnic diversity among health care providers. From the  
10 article:

11 "In what is called 'race-discordant'  
12 relationships, patients from ethnic groups frequently  
13 are treated by professionals from a different ethnic  
14 background. The research reviewed here documents  
15 ongoing racial and ethnic disparities in health care  
16 and links patient-physician race and ethnic  
17 concordance with higher patient satisfaction and  
18 better health care processes. Based on this research,  
19 the authors issue the following recommendation: ...  
20 health policy should be revised to encourage workforce  
21 diversity by funding programs that support the  
22 recruitment of minority students and medical  
23 faculty...".

24 (4) Another 2021 study by the National Center for  
25 Biotechnology Information at the National Institutes of  
26 Health analyzed minority representation across 10

1 different health care provider designations and found  
2 significant underrepresentation among Black, Hispanic, and  
3 Native American people across all 10 designations. This  
4 study makes specific mention of the disproportionate  
5 impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on minority  
6 communities and how greater diversity in our health care  
7 workforce could lead to increased cultural competence and  
8 improved health outcomes.

9 (5) These are just 2 studies among the countless that  
10 make clear the importance of diversity in our health care  
11 workforce. Illinois is no exception. More must be done to  
12 increase the diversity and community representation of our  
13 State's health care workforce in order to better meet the  
14 needs of underrepresented communities. This Act is  
15 intended to support workforce development programs  
16 specifically aimed at this mission.

17 (b) The purpose of this Act is to recognize and address the  
18 historic and systemic barriers that have prevented  
19 proportional representation by race, ethnicity, language,  
20 gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability  
21 status in the health care provider community and address  
22 access to care and health disparities by prioritizing  
23 scholarship and loan repayment programs to individuals from  
24 underrepresented communities pursuing health care careers.

25 These scholarship and loan repayment programs shall  
26 encourage health care providers to locate and practice in

1 areas of greatest need, as determined by provider shortage  
2 area data or health disparity data, and to support efforts for  
3 health care providers to better reflect the communities they  
4 serve.

5 Section 10. Definitions.

6 "Accredited school" means a college or university in which  
7 a degree in allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine,  
8 dentistry, physical therapy, or an equivalent credential for a  
9 health program is earned and for which the Council for Higher  
10 Education Accreditation or its affiliates has determined that  
11 the school meets specific standards for its programs, faculty,  
12 and curriculum.

13 "Advanced practice registered nurse" or "APRN" means an  
14 advanced practice registered nurse as defined under Section  
15 50-10 of the Nurse Practice Act.

16 "Allopathic medicine" means the use of pharmacological  
17 agents or physical interventions to treat or suppress symptoms  
18 or processes of diseases or conditions.

19 "Applicant" means a health care professional or medical  
20 facility who applies for loan repayment assistance or  
21 scholarship funds under this Act.

22 "Approved graduate training" means training in medicine,  
23 dentistry, or any other health profession that leads to  
24 eligibility for board certification, provides evidence of  
25 completion, and is approved by the appropriate health care

1 professional's body.

2 "Behavioral health provider" means a provider of a  
3 commonly recognized discipline in the behavioral health  
4 industry, including, but not limited to, licensed clinical  
5 social workers, behavioral health therapists, certified  
6 marriage and family counselors, licensed social workers, and  
7 addiction counselors.

8 "Breach of service obligation" means failure for any  
9 reason to begin or complete a contractual service commitment.

10 "Commercial loan" means a loan made by a bank, credit  
11 union, savings and loan association, insurance company,  
12 school, or other financial institution.

13 "Community health center" means a migrant health center,  
14 community health center, health care program for the homeless  
15 or for residents of public housing supported under Section 330  
16 of the federal Public Health Service Act, or FQHC, including  
17 an FQHC Look-Alike, as designated by the U.S. Department of  
18 Health and Human Services, that operates at least one  
19 federally designated primary health care delivery site in  
20 Illinois.

21 "Default" means failure to meet a legal obligation or  
22 condition of a loan.

23 "Department" means the Department of Public Health.

24 "Dental assistant" means a person who serves as a member  
25 of a dental care team, working directly with a dentist to  
26 perform duties that include, but are not limited to, assisting

1 with dental procedures, preparing patients for procedures,  
2 preparing examinations, and sterilizing equipment.

3 "Dentist" means a person licensed to practice dentistry  
4 under the Illinois Dental Practice Act.

5 "Director" means the Director of Public Health.

6 "Equity and Representation in Health Care Workforce  
7 Repayment Program" or "Repayment Program" means the Equity and  
8 Representation in Health Care Workforce Repayment Program  
9 created under subsection (a) of Section 15.

10 "Equity and Representation in Health Care Workforce  
11 Scholarship Program" or "Scholarship Program" means the Equity  
12 and Representation in Health Care Workforce Scholarship  
13 Program created under subsection (b) of Section 15.

14 "Federally Qualified Health Center" or "FQHC" means a  
15 health center funded under Section 330 of the federal Public  
16 Health Service Act.

17 "Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike" or "FQHC  
18 Look-Alike" means a health center that meets the requirements  
19 for receiving a grant under Section 330 of the federal Public  
20 Health Service Act but does not receive funding under that  
21 authority.

22 "Government loan" means a loan made by a federal, State,  
23 county, or city agency authorized to make the loan.

24 "Health care professional" means a physician, physician  
25 assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, physical  
26 therapist, physical therapist assistant, behavioral health

1 provider, psychiatrist, psychologist, pharmacist, dentist, or  
2 dental hygienist.

3 "Health professional shortage area" or "HPSA" means a  
4 designation from the U.S. Department of Health and Human  
5 Services that indicates the shortage of primary medical care  
6 or dental or mental health providers. The designation may be  
7 geographic, such as a county or service area; demographic,  
8 such as low-income population; or institutional, such as a  
9 comprehensive health center, FQHC, or other public facility.

10 "Lender" means the commercial or government entity that  
11 makes a qualifying loan.

12 "Loan repayment award" or "award" means the amount of  
13 funding awarded to a recipient based upon his or her  
14 reasonable educational expenses, up to a maximum established  
15 by the program.

16 "Loan repayment agreement" or "agreement" means the  
17 written instrument defining a legal relationship entered into  
18 between the Department and a recipient.

19 "Medical assistant" means a person who serves as a member  
20 of a medical care team working directly with other providers  
21 to perform duties that include, but are not limited to,  
22 gathering patient information, taking vital signs, preparing  
23 patients for examinations, and assisting physicians during  
24 examinations.

25 "Medical facility" means a facility in which the delivery  
26 of health services is provided. A medical facility must be a

1 nonprofit or public facility located in Illinois and includes  
2 the following:

3 (1) A Federally Qualified Health Center.

4 (2) An FQHC Look-Alike.

5 (3) A hospital system operated by a county with more  
6 than 3,000,000 residents.

7 "Medically underserved area" or "MUA" means an area  
8 designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human  
9 Services' Health Resources and Services Administration as  
10 having too few primary care providers, high infant mortality,  
11 high poverty, or a high elderly population.

12 "Osteopathic medicine" means medical practice based upon  
13 the theory that diseases are due to loss of structural  
14 integrity, which can be restored by manipulation of the parts  
15 and supplemented by therapeutic measures.

16 "Physical therapist" means an individual licensed as a  
17 physical therapist under the Illinois Physical Therapy Act.

18 "Physical therapist assistant" means an individual  
19 licensed as a physical therapist assistant under the Illinois  
20 Physical Therapy Act.

21 "Physician" means a person licensed to practice medicine  
22 in all of its branches under the Medical Practice Act of 1987.

23 "Physician assistant" means an individual licensed under  
24 the Physician Assistant Practice Act of 1987.

25 "Primary care" means health care that encompasses  
26 prevention services, basic diagnostic and treatment services,



1 and support services, including laboratory, radiology,  
2 transportation, and pharmacy services.

3 "Psychiatrist" means a physician licensed to practice  
4 medicine in Illinois under the Medical Practice Act of 1987  
5 who has successfully completed an accredited residency program  
6 in psychiatry.

7 "Qualifying loan" means a government loan or commercial  
8 loan used for tuition and reasonable educational and living  
9 expenses related to undergraduate or graduate education that  
10 was obtained by the recipient prior to his or her application  
11 for loan repayment and that is contemporaneous with the  
12 education received.

13 "Reasonable educational expenses" means costs for  
14 education, exclusive of tuition. These costs include, but are  
15 not limited to, fees, books, supplies, clinical travel,  
16 educational equipment, materials, board certification, or  
17 licensing examinations. "Reasonable educational expenses" do  
18 not exceed the estimated standard budget for expenses for the  
19 degree program and for the years of enrollment.

20 "Reasonable living expenses" means room and board,  
21 transportation, and commuting costs associated with the  
22 applicant's attendance and participation in educational and  
23 workforce training program. "Reasonable living expenses" do  
24 not exceed the estimated standard budget for the recipient's  
25 degree program and for the years of enrollment.

26 "Recognized training entity" means an entity approved by

1 the Department to provide training and education for medical  
2 assistants and dental assistants.

3 "Recipient" means a health care professional or medical  
4 facility that may use loan repayment funds.

5 "Rural" has the same meaning that is used by the federal  
6 Health Resources and Services Administration to determine  
7 eligibility for Rural Health Grants.

8 "State" means the State of Illinois.

9 Section 15. Repayment Program; Scholarship Program;  
10 eligibility requirements.

11 (a) The Department shall create and administer an Equity  
12 and Representation in Health Care Workforce Repayment Program.  
13 A health care professional may apply to the Department for  
14 loan repayment assistance under the Repayment Program. In  
15 order to be eligible for loan repayment under this Act, the  
16 health care professional or behavioral health provider shall  
17 comply with the following:

18 (1) Either:

19 (A) be working at a medical facility; or

20 (B) have accepted an offer of employment at a  
21 medical facility and will begin employment at that  
22 medical facility within 90 calendar days after the  
23 submission of the application.

24 (2) Either:

25 (A) have a degree in allopathic or osteopathic

1 medicine, nursing, dentistry, physical therapy, or  
2 other eligible health profession from an accredited  
3 school; have completed an approved graduate training  
4 program; and have a current, valid, and unencumbered  
5 license to practice the health profession in Illinois;  
6 or

7 (B) have a degree in a relevant field of study,  
8 such as behavioral health or social work.

9 (3) As necessary to his or her field of work, agree to  
10 see and treat all patients at the medical facility  
11 regardless of the patient's ability to pay for services.

12 (4) Submit an application to participate in the  
13 Program.

14 (5) Not be in breach of a health professional service  
15 obligation to the federal, State, or a local government.

16 (6) Not have any judgment liens arising from federal  
17 debt.

18 (7) Not be excluded, suspended, or disqualified by a  
19 federal agency.

20 (8) Sign a written agreement attesting to accepting  
21 repayment of health professional educational loans and to  
22 serve for the applicable period of obligated service in an  
23 HPSA or MUA located in Illinois.

24 (b) The Department shall create and administer an Equity  
25 and Representation in Health Care Workforce Scholarship  
26 Program. A medical facility or an individual may apply to the

1 Department to receive funds under the Scholarship Program. A  
2 medical facility may apply for a scholarship that covers  
3 expenses described under subsection (e) of Section 20. If an  
4 individual is the applicant, the individual shall either:

5 (1) be working at a medical facility; or

6 (2) have accepted an offer of employment at a medical  
7 facility and will begin employment at that medical  
8 facility within 90 calendar days after the submission of  
9 the application.

10 (c) A person who earns a degree from an unaccredited  
11 school may not participate in the Repayment Program.

12 Section 20. Use of Repayment Program and Scholarship  
13 Program funds.

14 (a) Loan repayment funds under the Repayment Program shall  
15 be used according to the following:

16 (1) To repay qualifying educational loans of health  
17 care professionals who agree to serve in a medical  
18 facility for a specified period of time to be determined  
19 by the Department.

20 (2) For educational loans that were obtained prior to  
21 the date the recipient submits an application for loan  
22 repayment assistance.

23 (3) To retire qualifying educational loans if the  
24 loans are the result of consolidated or refinanced debt.  
25 To qualify, the consolidated or refinanced loans shall:

1 (A) be a government loan or a loan from a  
2 commercial lender; and

3 (B) include only qualifying educational loans of  
4 the health care professional.

5 (b) Loan repayment funds under the Repayment Program shall  
6 not be used for any of the following:

7 (1) To repay a practice obligation resulting from  
8 educational loans or scholarships, whether from  
9 Illinois-based institutions or governments or those in  
10 other states.

11 (2) To fulfill practice obligations to the federal  
12 government, the State, or any other entity under an  
13 agreement with the federal government, State, or other  
14 entity.

15 (3) To retire qualifying educational loans if the  
16 consolidated or refinanced debt is:

17 (A) commingled with nonqualifying debt; or

18 (B) consolidated with a loan owed by another  
19 person, such as a spouse or child.

20 (c) Loan repayment funds under the Repayment Program may  
21 not be used by the recipient to reimburse himself or herself  
22 for a loan that has been repaid.

23 (d) Under the provisions of the federal Treasury Offset  
24 Program and the State Comptroller Act, recipients shall have  
25 their loan repayment assistance funds offset to fulfill a  
26 delinquent federal or State debt. The offset of loan repayment

1 assistance funds shall not reduce, waive, or suspend a  
2 recipient's service obligation under this Act.

3 (e) Scholarship Program funds shall be used to cover the  
4 costs of training as a medical assistant or dental assistant,  
5 or another health care profession training or education  
6 program, as deemed appropriate by the Department. Costs shall  
7 include the following:

8 (1) The cost of enrollment in a training program  
9 offered by an institute of higher learning, accredited  
10 online program, Illinois-based community college, or  
11 recognized training entity.

12 (2) Lab fees.

13 (3) Materials and test vouchers.

14 (4) Background checks.

15 (5) Drug screenings.

16 (6) Professional equipment and attire, such as scrubs.

17 (f) Applications for loan repayments and scholarships  
18 shall be available twice a year, with at least 5 months between  
19 the closing date of the last process and application deadline  
20 for the next process.

21 (g) An individual who meets the eligibility requirements  
22 set forth in this Act may apply for loan repayment or  
23 scholarship funds authorized by this Act. In order to promote  
24 greater diversity and community representation in health care,  
25 the Department shall set forward criteria that prioritizes  
26 applicants, including, but not limited to, the following:

1           (1) Those who identify as a person from a race,  
2           ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or  
3           disability status that is underrepresented in the health  
4           care sector.

5           (2) First generation postsecondary students.

6           (3) Reservists in the U.S. Armed Forces or military  
7           veterans.

8           (4) Persons working in rural medical facilities.

9           Section 25. Department powers. The Department may exercise  
10          the following powers:

11          (1) To make loan repayment and scholarship awards  
12          under the Repayment Program or Scholarship Program with  
13          the following priorities:

14                (A) To increase the number of health care  
15                providers in MUAs.

16                (B) To increase the number of behavioral health  
17                providers in MUAs.

18                (C) To increase the number of accredited, eligible  
19                health care provider residencies within the State.

20                (D) To increase the percentage of eligible health  
21                care providers establishing practice within the State  
22                upon completion of residency.

23                (E) To promote greater diversity and community  
24                representation in Illinois' health care workforce.

25          (2) To adopt rules necessary for the establishment and

1 maintenance of the Repayment Program and Scholarship  
2 Program required under this Act.

3 Section 30. Administrative procedure. The Illinois  
4 Administrative Procedure Act is hereby expressly adopted and  
5 incorporated herein as if all of the provisions of the Act were  
6 included in this Act.

7 Section 35. Annual report.

8 (a) The Department shall annually report the results and  
9 progress of the Repayment Program and Scholarship Program on  
10 or before March 15 of each year to the General Assembly and the  
11 Governor.

12 (b) The annual report to the General Assembly and the  
13 Governor shall include the impact of the Repayment Program and  
14 Scholarship Program on the ability of MUAs to attract and  
15 retain eligible health care providers, as well as increase  
16 diversity and community representation in Illinois' health  
17 care workforce. The report shall include recommendations to  
18 improve that ability.

19 Section 40. Failure to fulfill obligations.

20 (a) Loan repayment recipients under the Repayment Program  
21 who fail to maintain employment at a medical facility as  
22 defined in this Act for the amount of time determined by the  
23 Department shall pay to the Department a sum equal to the



1 amount of the annual scholarship grant for each year the  
2 recipient fails to fulfill such obligation. A scholarship  
3 recipient who fails to fulfill the employment obligation set  
4 forth in this Section shall have 30 days from the date on which  
5 that failure begins in which to enter into a contract with the  
6 Department that sets forth the manner in which that sum is  
7 required to be paid. If the contract is not entered into within  
8 that 30-day period or if the contract is entered into but the  
9 required payments are not made in the amounts and at the times  
10 provided in the contract, the scholarship recipient also shall  
11 be required to pay to the Department interest at the rate of 9%  
12 per annum on the amount of that sum remaining due and unpaid.  
13 The amounts paid to the Department under this Section shall be  
14 deposited into the Community Health Center Care Fund and shall  
15 be used by the Department to improve access to primary health  
16 care services as authorized by subsection (a) of Section  
17 2310-200 of the Department of Public Health Powers and Duties  
18 Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois.

19 (b) Scholarship recipients under the Scholarship Program  
20 who fail to maintain employment at a medical facility for the  
21 amount of time determined by the Department shall pay to the  
22 Department a sum equal to the amount of the annual scholarship  
23 grant for each year the recipient fails to fulfill the  
24 employment obligation. A scholarship recipient who fails to  
25 fulfill the employment obligation shall have 30 days from the  
26 date on which that failure begins in which to enter into a

1 contract with the Department that sets forth the manner in  
2 which that sum is required to be paid. If the contract is not  
3 entered into within that 30-day period, or if the contract is  
4 entered into but the required payments are not made in the  
5 amounts and at the times provided in the contract, the  
6 scholarship recipient shall also be required to pay to the  
7 Department interest at the rate of 9% per annum on the amount  
8 of that sum remaining due and unpaid. The amounts paid to the  
9 Department under this Section shall be deposited into the  
10 Community Health Center Care Fund and shall be used by the  
11 Department to improve access to primary health care services  
12 as authorized by subsection (a) of Section 2310-200 of the  
13 Department of Public Health Powers and Duties Law of the Civil  
14 Administrative Code of Illinois.

15 Section 45. Transfer of moneys; use of funds.

16 (a) The Department may transfer to the Illinois Finance  
17 Authority, into an account outside the State treasury, moneys  
18 in the Community Health Center Care Fund as needed, but not to  
19 exceed an amount established, by rule, by the Department to  
20 establish a reserve or credit enhancement escrow account to  
21 support a financing program or a loan or equipment leasing  
22 program to provide moneys to support the purposes of  
23 subsection (a) of Section 2310-200 of the Department of Public  
24 Health Powers and Duties Law of the Civil Administrative Code  
25 of Illinois. The disposition of moneys at the conclusion of

1 any financing program under this Section shall be determined  
2 by an interagency agreement.

3 (b) The Department may use a reasonable portion of funds  
4 appropriated for this Act to increase Department resources as  
5 is necessary in order to effectively administer the Repayment  
6 Program and Scholarship Program.".