

NHSC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Recently Proposed Legislation

- S. 54 (Sens. Dick Durbin (D-IL) & Marco Rubio (R-FL)): **Strengthening America’s Healthcare Readiness Act**: bipartisan proposal for an additional \$5B appropriation for the NHSC program, with a 40% set aside for racial and ethnic minorities and students from low-income urban and rural areas. The bill would also establish a demonstration program to mobilize the NHSC workforce to serve in emergency capacities via National Disaster Medical System (NDMS).
- S. 1587 / HR 3150 (Sens. Tina Smith (D-MN) & Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Rep. John Katko (R-NY)): **Mental Health Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act**: bipartisan, bicameral bill reintroduced from 115th & 116th Congresses; proposes to amend Title VII of the PHSA to provide up to \$250k in eligible student loan repayment for mental health professionals who work in mental health HPSAs.

Recently Proposed Legislation

- S. 924: (Sens. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), & Tina Smith (D-MN)): **Rural America Health Corps Act**: proposes to establish an NHSC LRP demonstration program for rural providers. Eligible individuals would be the same as the traditional LRP under section 338B; participants would be required to complete 5 years of service in a rural HPSA in exchange for \$200,000 in loan repayment.
- HR 3297: (Reps. Jason Crow (D-CO), Michael Burgess (R-TX), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), & Brett Guthrie (R-KY)): **Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Act**: proposes to establish a Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program to promote the recruitment of public health professionals at local, state, and tribal public health agencies in section 330J of the PHSA. Qualifying individuals must be in their final year of pursuing a public health or health professions degree, or have graduated within the last 10 years. Individuals would agree to a 3 year service commitment at a local, state, or tribal public health agency in exchange for up to \$35,000 of loan repayment per year of service.

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- **HR 2295: HIV Epidemic Loan Repayment Program (HELP) Act:** reintroduced from the 116th Congress (originally introduced by the late Rep. John Lewis (D-GA)); authorizes a new LRP in Title VII of the PHSA, which will offer up to \$250,000 in loan repayment in exchange for 5 years of service. Eligible providers include physicians, NPs, PAs, pharmacists, and dentists who provide HIV treatment in HPSAs or Ryan White-funded sites.
- **S. 1010 (Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)): Turn the Tide Act:** an appropriations bill which proposes to provide additional funding for programs under the SUPPORT Act. The bill proposes to appropriate additional funding for section 781 of the PHSA to appropriate \$25M for each of FY 2021-2024 for the Substance Use Disorder Treatment Workforce (STAR) LRP.

Recently Proposed Legislation

- S. 1593: (Sens. Brian Schatz (D-HI) + John Barrasso (R-WY)): **Ensuring Access to General Surgery Act of 2021**: bipartisan proposal to amend Title III of the PHSA to require the Secretary to designate general surgery shortage areas. Sens. Schatz and Barrasso introduced a similar bill in the 116th Congress.
- S. 2676 / HR 3759 (Sen. John Tester (D-MT) & Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO)): **Physical Therapist Workforce and Patient Access Act of 2021**: bipartisan, bicameral proposal to amend section 331 of the PHSA to alter the definition of primary health services to include physical therapy. The bill further proposes to amend the authority for the NHSC LRP in section 338B to include physical therapists.

Recently Proposed Legislation

- S. 2890 (Sen. Jackie Rosen (D-NV)): **Provider Training in Palliative Care Act:** bipartisan proposal to amend section 331 of the PHSA to allow participants in the NHSC SP and NHSC LRP to defer their obligated service in order to receive training in palliative care services. The bill would authorize the Secretary to grant deferrals for up to one year.