

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H. F. 729

DATE: March 23, 2001

Version: First engrossment

Authors: Ozment and others

Subject: Nursing grant, loan, and scholarship programs; community health care planning and implementation program

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Overview

This bill establishes a grant program for economically disadvantaged nursing students, a rural nursing career scholarship program, a public school nurse loan forgiveness program, and a community health care planning and implementation program; and modifies the existing summer health care intern program and nursing loan forgiveness program.

Section

- 1 **Grants for economically disadvantaged nursing students.** Adds § 136A.147. Establishes a grant program under the higher education services office to provide grants to economically disadvantaged nursing students.
 - Subd. 1. Establishment.** Establishes a grant program under the higher education services office to provide grants to economically disadvantaged students in programs that lead to licensure as a registered nurse or in programs of advanced nursing education.
 - Subd. 2. Eligibility.** Establishes eligibility criteria for receiving a grant. Requires a grant to be awarded for one academic year and allows it to be renewed for up to six semesters or nine quarters.
 - Subd. 3. Responsibility of nursing programs.** Allows a school, college, or nursing program that wishes to participate in this program to apply to the higher education services office for grant funds. Requires a participating program to establish criteria for awarding the grants, and specifies what the criteria must include. Allows grants to be between \$3,000 and \$5,000. Prohibits grant funds from being used to replace other grant or scholarship funds for the student.
 - Subd. 4. Responsibilities of higher education services office.** Requires the higher education services office to annually select up to three programs to participate in the grant program, at least one of which must be in the seven-county metro area and one of which must be outside the seven-county metro area. Requires distribution of funds to participating programs. Establishes

criteria for the office to use to select nursing programs. Permits the office to establish an advisory committee to assist the office in choosing programs to participate. Allows the office to grant each participating nursing program up to \$30,000 per year for administrative costs.

2 **Summer internships.** Amends § 144.1464, subd. 1. Directs the commissioner of health to award grants to nursing facilities, in addition to hospitals and clinics as current law allows, to establish a secondary or post-secondary summer health care intern program.

3 **Criteria.** Amends § 144.1464, subd. 2. Amends this subdivision to conform with section 2, directing the commissioner to award grants to nursing facilities to establish a summer health care intern program. Expands eligibility criteria to be used by hospitals and clinics to hire pupils, by including a pupil planning to enroll in or enrolled in a health care training program (current law requires pupils to be enrolled in or be planning to enroll in a two-year or four-year degree program). Strikes language establishing wages for the summer health care intern program at between minimum wage and \$6 per hour.

4 **Grants.** Amends § 144.1464, subd. 3. Amends this subdivision to conform with section 2, directing the commissioner to award grants to nursing facilities to establish a summer health care intern program.

5 **Loan forgiveness.** Amends § 144.1496. Expands the nursing loan forgiveness program from ten to 200 applicants a year. Requires at least 50% of accepted applicants to agree to practice at a facility located outside the seven-county metro area. Allows participants to receive loan forgiveness for up to three years instead of two, and allows them to be forgiven up to \$5,000 a year instead of \$3,000 a year.

6 **Rural nursing career scholarship program.** Adds § 144.1498. Establishes a rural nursing career scholarship program.

Subd. 1. Establishment. Directs the commissioner of health to establish a rural nursing career scholarship program. Allows the commissioner to award 100 scholarships each fiscal year.

Subd. 2. Eligibility. Establishes eligibility criteria for participation in the program, including agreeing to serve at least one year with a health care facility or provider outside the seven-county metro area and being admitted to or enrolled in a degree-granting program leading to licensure as a licensed practical nurse or registered nurse.

Subd. 3. Amount of scholarship. Limits the amount of a scholarship to \$5,000 a year.

Subd. 4. Scholarship renewals. Allows a scholarship to be renewed for up to two years if the student is a Minnesota resident and is making satisfactory progress in the program.

Subd. 5. Penalty for nonfulfillment. If a participant does not complete the agreed-upon service obligation, requires the commissioner to collect 100% of the scholarship paid plus interest.

Subd. 6. Suspension or waiver of obligation. Cancels payment or service obligations if a participant dies, and allows the commissioner to waive or suspend obligations in cases of disability and for other requests on a case-by-case basis.

7 **Public school nurse loan forgiveness.** Amends § 144.1499. Establishes a public school nurse loan forgiveness program.

Subds. 1-3. Definitions; qualifying educational loans; public school nurse. Defines qualifying educational loans and public school nurse for this section.

Subd. 4. Creation of account. Creates a public school nurse education account in the general fund, and directs the commissioner to use money from the account for a loan forgiveness program for public school nurses.

Subd. 5. Eligibility. Requires interested students to apply to the loan forgiveness program while attending a program designed to prepare the student to become a public school nurse. Requires

participants to agree to serve a minimum of one year as a public school nurse.

Subd. 6. Loan forgiveness. Allows the commissioner to accept up to 50 applicants per year to the program, and requires the commissioner to give preference to applicants who have studied in Minnesota and are the closest to completing their training. For up to two years, directs the commissioner to pay the participant \$2,500 per year of service, not to exceed \$5,000 or the balance of the loans.

Subd. 7. Penalty for nonfulfillment. If a participant does not fulfill the required service commitment, requires the commissioner to collect 100% of loan payments made plus interest. Requires this money to be deposited in the public school nurse education account.

Subd. 8. Suspension or waiver of obligation. Cancels payment or service obligations if a participant dies, and allows the commissioner to waive or suspend obligations in cases of disability and for other requests on a case-by-case basis.

8 **Community health care planning and implementation program.** Adds § 145.928. Requires the commissioner of health, within the limits of available appropriations, to make grants to communities and regions to plan and implement responses to local shortages of nurses and other health care personnel. Requires an applicant to include representatives of at least local health and social service agencies, health care providers and consumers, and housing agencies. Allows grants of up to \$30,000 per year to be made for up to two years of planning, and grants of up to \$50,000 per year to be made for up to five years of implementation. Requires grantees to provide periodic progress reports on planning and implementation.

9 **Study of loan forgiveness and related programs.** Directs the commissioner of health to study and make recommendations to the legislature on ways to modify or expand existing loan forgiveness, grant, and tuition waiver programs and health care training programs to better address worker shortages.

10 **Appropriations.** Makes blank appropriations to fund this bill.