

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill modifies the health professional education loan forgiveness program, modifies nursing facility employee scholarship costs, modifies nursing facility external fixed costs, and appropriates money for a long-term care grant program, a long-term care study, and the nurse loan forgiveness program.

Section

- 1 **Definitions.** Amends § 144.1501, subd. 1. Adds a definition of “dental therapist.”
- 2 **Creation of account.** Amends § 144.1501, subd. 2. Allows dental therapists agreeing to practice in a Minnesota nursing home or intermediate care facility for person with a developmental disability to participate in the loan forgiveness program.
- 3 **Eligibility.** Amends § 144.1501, subd. 3. Allows the commissioner of health to consider applications for the health professional education loan forgiveness program from nursing program graduates who are registered nurses or licensed practical nurses. Limits the agreement to serve a nurse needs to make to a minimum of two years full-time service, as opposed to three years for other applicants.
- 4 **Employee scholarship costs and training in English as a second language.** Amends § 256B.431, subd. 36. Modifies nursing facility employee scholarship costs for the period between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2017, by reducing the average number of hours worked per week necessary to qualify, expanding eligible professions, and including additional eligible costs. Specifies that this rate increase is an optional rate add-on that a facility must request from the commissioner and that the rate increase must be used for scholarships.

Section

- 5 External fixed costs.** Amends § 256B.441, subd. 13. Modifies the definition of “external fixed costs” under the nursing facility reimbursement system to include nursing assistant training.
- 6 Calculation of payment rate for external fixed costs.** Amends § 256B.441, subd. 53. Makes a conforming change to the external fixed costs payment rate calculation.
- 7 Appropriation; Long-Term Care Grant Program.** Paragraph (a) appropriates an unspecified amount in fiscal year 2016 from the general fund to the commissioner of employment and economic development to further the advancement of long-term care careers. Allows long-term care employers, Minnesota postsecondary education institutions, and adult training programs to apply to receive grants for specified purposes including hiring incentives, leadership training for staff, providing mentorship models, and supporting health care education programming.
- Paragraph (b) specifies the application process.
- Paragraph (c) requires the commissioner to publish the grant notice twice per year and make grants available on October 1 and March 1 of each year the grant program is funded.
- 8 Appropriation; Long-Term Care Study.** Appropriates an unspecified amount in fiscal year 2016 from the general fund to the commissioner of employment and economic development to study ways in which tax credits or hiring incentives can benefit long-term care employers to recruit, retain, and provide career ladders to employees in the long-term care field. Requires the commissioner to report recommendations to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over employment and economic development, health, and human services policy and finance by February 1, 2016.
- 9 Appropriation; Nurse Loan Forgiveness Program.** Appropriates \$260,000 in fiscal year 2016 from the general fund to the commissioner of health for the nurse loan forgiveness program. Specifies this appropriation is in addition to any previous appropriation for this purpose and is added to the program’s base.