

113<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 5223

To amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants to States for the purpose of assisting the States in operating an RDOCS program in order to provide for the increased availability of primary health care services in health professional shortage areas.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 2014

Mr. McDERMOTT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants to States for the purpose of assisting the States in operating an RDOCS program in order to provide for the increased availability of primary health care services in health professional shortage areas.

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 “Restoring the Doctors  
5        of Our Country through Scholarships Act of 2014” or the  
6        “RDOCS Act of 2014”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Due to an aging population, the retirement  
4 of a generation of physicians, and 30,000,000 newly  
5 insured under the Patient Protection and Affordable  
6 Care Act (Public Law 110–148), the United States  
7 is expected to experience an acute physician work-  
8 force shortage in the coming decades, particularly in  
9 primary care. If unaddressed, this shortage will com-  
10 promise the health of the population as well as the  
11 ability of the United States to remain competitive in  
12 the world.

13 (2) By 2020, the shortage of primary care doc-  
14 tors is expected to reach 45,000.

15 (3) The shortage will disproportionately impact  
16 rural communities and underserved urban commu-  
17 nities.

18 (4) The Reserve Officers' Training Corps  
19 (ROTC) model of education and training is a re-  
20 spected and effective way of meeting the Nation's  
21 need for educated and trained officers in the United  
22 States Armed Forces, and can be applied to solving  
23 the Nation's primary care shortage.

24 (5) There are 10 applicants for each National  
25 Health Service Corps scholarship awarded, indi-  
26 cating the unmet demand for medical scholarships.

1 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO STATES FOR RESTORING THE DOCTORS**  
2 **OF OUR COUNTRY THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS**  
3 **(RDOCS) PROGRAMS.**

4 Subpart III of part D of title III of the Public Health  
5 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l et seq.) is amended by adding  
6 at the end the following:

7 **“SEC. 338N. GRANTS TO STATES FOR SCHOLARSHIP PRO-**  
8 **GRAMS.**

9 “(a) GRANTS TO STATES.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting  
11 through the Administrator of the Health Resources  
12 and Services Administration, shall make grants to  
13 States for the purpose of assisting the States in op-  
14 erating a program described in paragraph (2) (re-  
15 ferred to in this section as an ‘RDOCS program’) in  
16 order to provide for the increased availability of pri-  
17 mary health care services in health professional  
18 shortage areas.

19 “(2) APPLICATIONS.—To seek a grant under  
20 this section, a State shall submit an application in  
21 such form, in such manner, and containing such  
22 agreements, assurances, and information as the Sec-  
23 retary determines to be necessary to carry out this  
24 section.

25 “(3) TOTAL NUMBER OF NEW RDOCS SCHOLARS  
26 EACH YEAR.—Subject to the availability of appro-

1        priations, the Secretary shall ensure that a total of  
2        at least 4,000 new RDOCS scholars are awarded  
3        scholarships under this section each academic year.

4        “(b) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM DESCRIBED.—An  
5 RDOCS program is a program of entering into contracts  
6 between the State involved and an RDOCS scholar under  
7 which—

8            “(1) the State involved agrees—

9            “(A) to pay all tuition and costs for the  
10 RDOCS scholar’s undergraduate medical edu-  
11 cation, to the participating undergraduate med-  
12 ical program, for a period of study not exceed-  
13 ing 48 consecutive months; and

14            “(B) to pay, during such period, a cost-of-  
15 living stipend, in an amount to be determined  
16 by the Secretary, to the RDOCS scholar; and

17            “(2) the RDOCS scholar agrees—

18            “(A) to be admitted into and maintain en-  
19 rollment in a participating undergraduate med-  
20 ical program in the RDOCS scholar’s State of  
21 residence (or if such State of residence operates  
22 no such program, in a participating under-  
23 graduate medical program in a State within an  
24 associated region);

1           “(B) when enrolled in such program, to  
2           maintain a minimum level (to be determined by  
3           the Secretary) of academic standing;

4           “(C) to complete an accredited residency  
5           training program in a primary care specialty;

6           “(D) to become licensed to practice medi-  
7           cine in the applicant’s State of residence;

8           “(E) to receive and maintain board certifi-  
9           cation in a primary care speciality; and

10           “(F) to complete a 5-year post-graduate  
11           period of service in a health professional short-  
12           age area.

13           “(c) PRIORITY IN AWARDING SCHOLARSHIPS.—In se-  
14           lecting RDOCS scholars and awarding scholarship con-  
15           tracts described in subsection (b), the State involved shall  
16           give preference to applicants who are enrolled in—

17           “(1) an accelerated track family-medicine pro-  
18           gram; or

19           “(2) a program that includes clinical training in  
20           rural or underserved urban communities.

21           “(d) DIRECT ADMINISTRATION BY STATE AGENCY.—  
22           The RDOCS program of any State receiving a grant under  
23           this section shall be administered directly by a State agen-  
24           cy.

25           “(e) REQUIREMENT OF MATCHING FUNDS.—

1           “(1) IN GENERAL.—Any State receiving a grant  
2           under this section shall, with respect to the costs of  
3           making payments on behalf of individuals under  
4           scholarship contracts described in subsection (b),  
5           make available (directly or through donations from  
6           public or private entities) non-Federal contributions  
7           in cash toward such costs in an amount equal to not  
8           less than \$1 for each \$9 of Federal funds provided  
9           through the grant.

10           “(2) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT OF NON-  
11           FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION.—In determining the  
12           amount of non-Federal contributions in cash that a  
13           State has provided pursuant to paragraph (1)—

14                   “(A) any amounts provided to the State by  
15                   the Federal Government shall not be included;  
16                   and

17                   “(B) any amounts expended by the State  
18                   as administrative funds to operate its RDOCS  
19                   program may, at the State’s discretion, be in-  
20                   cluded.

21           “(f) COORDINATION WITH FEDERAL PROGRAM.—

22                   “(1) ASSIGNMENTS FOR HEALTH PROFES-  
23                   SIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS UNDER FEDERAL PRO-  
24                   GRAM.—Any State receiving a grant under this sec-  
25                   tion shall, in carrying out its RDOCS program, as-

1 sign RDOCS officers participating in the program  
2 only to public and nonprofit private entities located  
3 in and providing health services in health profes-  
4 sional shortage areas.

5 “(2) REMEDIES FOR BREACH OF CONTRACTS.—  
6 The Secretary may not make a grant under sub-  
7 section (a) unless the State involved agrees that the  
8 scholarship contracts provided by the State pursuant  
9 to subsection (b) will provide remedies for any  
10 breach of the contracts by the RDOCS scholars and  
11 RDOCS officers involved.

12 “(3) LIMITATION REGARDING CONTRACT IN-  
13 DUCEMENTS.—Any State receiving a grant under  
14 this section shall ensure that contracts between the  
15 State and RDOCS scholars under this section do not  
16 include any terms more favorable to the RDOCS  
17 scholars than the most favorable terms which the  
18 Secretary is authorized to provide in contracts under  
19 the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Pro-  
20 gram under section 338A, including terms regarding  
21 the availability of remedies for any breach of the  
22 contracts by the health professionals involved.

23 “(g) RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF FUNDS.—Any State  
24 receiving a grant under this section shall not expend the  
25 grant funds for any purpose other than making payments

1 on behalf of or to RDOCS scholars under contracts en-  
2 tered into pursuant to this section.

3 “(h) REPORTS BY STATES.—Any State receiving a  
4 grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary—

5 “(1) a report on the State’s RDOCS program  
6 not later than January 10 of each fiscal year imme-  
7 diately following any fiscal year for which the State  
8 has received such a grant; and

9 “(2) such other reports regarding the State’s  
10 RDOCS program, as are determined to be appro-  
11 priate by the Secretary.

12 “(i) REPORTS BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall  
13 report annually to the relevant committees on the physi-  
14 cian workforce in the United States, and shall include in  
15 each such report—

16 “(1) data on the physician shortage, if any,  
17 disaggregated by State and region; and

18 “(2) a gap analysis of the primary care practi-  
19 tioners needed in each State and region, and 5- and  
20 10-year estimates of the funding needed to close the  
21 gap through the RDOCS program.

22 “(j) NONCOMPLIANCE.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not  
24 make payments under this section to a State for any  
25 fiscal year subsequent to the first fiscal year of such



1 payments unless the Secretary determines that, for  
2 the immediately preceding fiscal year, the State has  
3 complied with each of the agreements made by the  
4 State under this section.

5 “(2) REDUCTION IN GRANT RELATIVE TO NUM-  
6 BER OF BREACHED CONTRACTS.—

7 “(A) DETERMINATION OF NUMBER OF  
8 BREACHED CONTRACTS.—Before making a  
9 grant under this section to a State for a fiscal  
10 year, the Secretary shall determine the number  
11 of contracts provided pursuant to the State’s  
12 RDOCS program with respect to which there  
13 has been an initial breach by the RDOCS schol-  
14 ars or officers involved during the fiscal year  
15 preceding the fiscal year for which the State is  
16 applying to receive the grant.

17 “(B) REDUCTION OF GRANTS.—Subject to  
18 paragraph (3), in the case of a State with 1 or  
19 more initial breaches for purposes of subpara-  
20 graph (A), the Secretary shall reduce the  
21 amount of a grant under this section to the  
22 State for the fiscal year involved by an amount  
23 equal to the sum of—

24 “(i) the expenditures of Federal funds  
25 made regarding the contracts involved; and

1           “(ii) an amount representing interest  
2           on the amount of such expenditures, deter-  
3           mined with respect to each contract on the  
4           basis of the maximum legal rate prevailing  
5           for loans made during the time amounts  
6           were paid under the contract, as deter-  
7           mined by the Treasurer of the United  
8           States.

9           “(3) WAIVER REGARDING REDUCTION IN  
10          GRANT.—The Secretary may waive the requirement  
11          of paragraph (2)(B) with respect to the initial  
12          breach of a contract if the Secretary determines that  
13          such breach by the RDOCS scholar or officer in-  
14          volved was attributable solely to the professional  
15          having a serious illness.

16          “(k) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section:

17                 “(1) ACCELERATED TRACK FAMILY-MEDICINE  
18          PROGRAM.—The term ‘accelerated track family-med-  
19          icine program’ refers to an appropriately accredited,  
20          integrated course of study in which a candidate can  
21          complete undergraduate medical education and grad-  
22          uate medical education in 6 years.

23                 “(2) ASSOCIATED REGION.—The term ‘associ-  
24          ated region’ refers to—

1           “(A) the area encompassing the boundaries  
2 of Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana,  
3 and Idaho;

4           “(B) the area encompassing the bound-  
5 aries of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts,  
6 Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Vermont;

7           “(C) the area encompassing the boundaries  
8 of Delaware and Pennsylvania; or

9           “(D) the area encompassing the bound-  
10 aries of Maryland, the District of Columbia,  
11 and Virginia.

12           “(3) BOARD CERTIFICATION.—The term ‘board  
13 certification’ means a certification to practice medi-  
14 cine in a specialty, by an appropriate medical spe-  
15 cialty board.

16           “(4) HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE  
17 AREA.—The term ‘health professional shortage area’  
18 means a health professional shortage area des-  
19 ignated under section 332.

20           “(5) PARTICIPATING UNDERGRADUATE MED-  
21 ICAL PROGRAM.—The term ‘participating under-  
22 graduate medical program’ means an allopathic or  
23 osteopathic undergraduate medical program oper-  
24 ated by a State.

1           “(6) PRIMARY CARE SPECIALTY.—The term  
2           ‘primary care specialty’ means pediatrics, geriatric,  
3           gerontology, family medicine, or general internal  
4           medicine.

5           “(7) RDOCS OFFICER.—The term ‘RDOCS of-  
6           ficer’ means an RDOCS program participant who  
7           has completed undergraduate medical training, but  
8           has not yet fulfilled the remaining requirements of  
9           his or her scholarship contract under subsection (b).

10           “(8) RDOCS SCHOLAR.—The term ‘RDOCS  
11           scholar’ means an individual participating in an  
12           RDOCS program pursuant to a scholarship contract  
13           under subsection (b), who has not yet completed un-  
14           dergraduate medical education.

15           “(9) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The term ‘rel-  
16           evant committees’ means the Committee on Health,  
17           Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and  
18           the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the  
19           House of Representatives.

20           “(10) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means each of  
21           the 50 States and the District of Columbia.”.

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