

A RESOLUTION

24-682

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

November 1, 2022

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the DC Nurse Education Enhancement Program Amendment Act of 2021 to allow the University of the District of Columbia to provide nursing students pursuing a Licensed Practical Nurse to Associate in Applied Science in Nursing degree through its Community College with a monthly stipend for living expenses and transportation.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “DC Nursing Education Enhancement Program Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2022”.

Sec. 2. (a) Nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and home-care agencies have long faced challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified health care staff. The COVID-19 health emergency accelerated the growing shortage of health-care workers and made it more difficult for employers to find and keep qualified workers. To meet these hiring needs, the Council passed the DC Nurse Education Enhancement Program Amendment Act of 2021, effective November 13, 2021 (D.C. Law 24-45; D.C. Official Code § 32-1693.01 *et seq.*) (“DC Nurse Education Act”), as part of the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Support Act of 2021 to fund and train District residents as health-care workers.

(b) The DC Nurse Education Act established and funded the DC Nurse Education Enhancement Program (“Program”) to assist students working toward nursing degrees and nursing-care certifications such as Certified Nursing Assistant (“CNA”), Home Health Aide (“HHA”), Medication Aide Certified (“MA-C”), Registered Nurse (“RN”), and Licensed Practical Nurse (“LPN”). The Program provides, among other things, living and transportation stipends for students enrolled in nursing courses at the University of the District of Columbia Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning Division (“WDLL”). The Program also provides for tuition assistance for students enrolled in courses at the University of the District of Columbia Community College (“UDC-CC”) and for students pursuing a bachelor’s degree as part of the RN to BSN Program; however, UDC-CC students are not authorized to receive living and transportation stipends.

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(c) UDC-CC enrolled 75 students in School Year 2021-2022 and learned that while many students' tuition were paid through federal Pell Grants, they struggled with paying for expenses related to program participation. These expenses vary, but many students desperately need financial assistance for transportation to and from their classes and purchasing food while on campus. Students struggling with transportation and hunger will not succeed in their courses.

(d) Therefore, there exists an immediate need to amend the DC Nurse Education Act to allow UDC-CC to use existing Program funds for stipends for students pursuing an LPN to AASN Degree at UDC-CC. This amendment would provide UDC-CC with the flexibility to meet the needs of its students in the Program and allow students to focus, learn, and thrive in their classes.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the DC Nursing Education Enhancement Program Amendment Act of 2022 be adopted after a single reading.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.