

# HOUSE BILL 459

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By: **Chair, Ways and Means Committee (By Request – Departmental – Health and Mental Hygiene)**

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2014

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and**  
3 **Physician Assistants**

4 FOR the purpose of expanding the scope of the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment  
5 Program for Physicians to provide certain education loan repayments to  
6 physician assistants who provide primary care in certain designated  
7 professional shortage areas under certain circumstances; expanding the  
8 definition of “primary care” to include women’s health; and generally relating to  
9 the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and  
10 Physician Assistants.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

12 Article – Education

13 Section 18–2801 and 18–2803 through 18–2805 to be under the amended  
14 subtitle “Subtitle 28. Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for  
15 Physicians and Physician Assistants”

16 Annotated Code of Maryland

17 (2008 Replacement Volume and 2013 Supplement)

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
19 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 **Article – Education**

21 Subtitle 28. Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians AND  
22 **PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS.**

23 18–2801.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

2 (b) “Department” means the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

3 (c) “Education loan” means any loan that is obtained for tuition, educational  
4 expenses, or living expenses for undergraduate or graduate study leading to practice  
5 as a physician **OR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT**.

6 (d) “Fund” means the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program Fund.

7 (e) “Primary care” includes:

8 (1) Primary care;

9 (2) Family medicine;

10 (3) Internal medicine;

11 (4) Obstetrics;

12 (5) Pediatrics;

13 (6) Geriatrics;

14 (7) Emergency medicine; [and]

15 **(8) WOMEN’S HEALTH; AND**

16 **[(8) (9) Psychiatry.**

17 (f) “Program” means the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for  
18 Physicians **AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**.

19 18–2803.

20 There is a Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians **AND**  
21 **PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS** in the State.

22 18–2804.

23 (a) (1) In this section, “eligible field of employment” means employment  
24 by an organization, institution, association, society, or corporation that is exempt from  
25 taxation under § 501(c)(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

26 (2) “Eligible field of employment” includes employment by the State or  
27 any local government in the State.

1 (b) The Office shall assist in the repayment with the funds transferred to the  
2 Office by the Comptroller under § 14–207(c)(2)(i) of the Health Occupations Article of  
3 the amount of education loans owed by a physician **OR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT** who:

4 (1) (i) Practices primary care in an eligible field of employment in  
5 a geographic area of the State that has been federally designated; or

6 (ii) Is a medical resident specializing in primary care who  
7 agrees to practice for at least 2 years as a primary care physician in an eligible field of  
8 employment in a geographic area of the State that has been federally designated; and

9 (2) Meets any other requirements established by the Office, in  
10 consultation with the Department.

11 (c) Any unspent portions of the money that is transferred to the Office for  
12 use under this subtitle from the Board of Physicians Fund may not be transferred to or  
13 revert to the General Fund of the State, but shall remain in the Fund maintained by  
14 the Office to administer the Program.

15 18–2805.

16 (a) In addition to the assistance provided under § 18–2804 of this subtitle,  
17 the Office may, subject to the availability of money in the Fund, assist in the  
18 repayment of an education loan owed by a physician **OR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT** who:

19 (1) Practices a medical specialty that has been identified by the  
20 Department as being in shortage in the geographic area of the State where the  
21 physician **OR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT** practices that specialty; and

22 (2) Commits to practicing in the area for a period of time determined  
23 by the Office.

24 (b) The Office shall prioritize funding for the repayment of education loans  
25 through the Program in the following order:

26 (1) Physicians **AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS** that meet the  
27 requirements under § 18–2804(b) of this subtitle;

28 (2) Physicians **AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS** practicing primary care  
29 in a geographic area where the Department has identified a shortage of primary care  
30 physicians **OR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**; and

31 (3) Physicians **AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS** practicing a medical  
32 specialty other than primary care in a geographic area where the Department has  
33 identified a shortage of that specialty.

1           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
2   October 1, 2014.