

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6578

To amend the Public Health Service Act to establish the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 21, 2020

Mr. CROW (for himself and Mr. BURGESS) 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 establish the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program.

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 “Public Health Work-  
5 force Loan Repayment Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE LOAN REPAYMENT**  
7 **PROGRAM.**

8 Part D of title III of the Public Health Service Act  
9 (42 U.S.C. 254b et seq.) is amended by adding at the end  
10 the following new subpart:

1           **“Subpart XIII—Public Health Workforce**

2   **“SEC. 340J. LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.**

3           “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Health  
4 and Human Services shall establish a program to be  
5 known as the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment  
6 Program (referred to in this section as the ‘Program’) to  
7 assure an adequate supply of and encourage recruitment  
8 of public health professionals to eliminate critical public  
9 health workforce shortages in local, State, and Tribal pub-  
10 lic health agencies.

11          “(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to participate in  
12 the Program, an individual shall—

13           “(1)(A) be accepted for enrollment, or be en-  
14 rolled, as a student in an accredited academic edu-  
15 cational institution in a State or territory in the  
16 final year of a course of study or program leading  
17 to a public health or health professions degree or  
18 certificate and have accepted employment with a  
19 local, State, or Tribal public health agency, or a re-  
20 lated training fellowship, as recognized by the Sec-  
21 retary, to commence upon graduation; or

22           “(B)(i) have graduated, during the preceding  
23 10-year period, from an accredited educational insti-  
24 tution in a State or territory and received a public  
25 health or health professions degree or certificate;  
26 and

1           “(ii) be employed by, or have accepted employ-  
2           ment with, a local, State, or Tribal public health  
3           agency or a related training fellowship, as recognized  
4           by the Secretary;

5           “(2) be a United States citizen;

6           “(3)(A) submit an application to the Secretary  
7           to participate in the Program; and

8           “(B) execute a written contract as required in  
9           subsection (c); and

10          “(4) not have received, for the same service, a  
11          reduction of loan obligations under section 428J,  
12          428K, 428L, 455(m), or 460 of the Higher Edu-  
13          cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078–10, 1078–11,  
14          1078–12, 1087e(m), and 1087j).

15          “(c) CONTRACT.—The written contract referred to in  
16          subsection (b)(3)(B) between the Secretary and an indi-  
17          vidual shall contain—

18                 “(1) an agreement on the part of the Secretary  
19                 that the Secretary will repay, on behalf of the indi-  
20                 vidual, loans incurred by the individual in the pur-  
21                 suit of the relevant degree or certificate in accord-  
22                 ance with the terms of the contract;

23                 “(2) an agreement on the part of the individual  
24                 that the individual will serve in the full-time employ-  
25                 ment of a local, State, or Tribal public health agency

1 or a related fellowship program in a position related  
2 to the course of study or program for which the con-  
3 tract was awarded for a period of time equal to the  
4 greater of—

5 “(A) 3 years; or

6 “(B) such longer period of time as deter-  
7 mined appropriate by the Secretary and the in-  
8 dividual;

9 “(3) an agreement, as appropriate, on the part  
10 of the individual to relocate to a priority service area  
11 (as determined by the Secretary) in exchange for an  
12 additional loan repayment incentive amount to be  
13 determined by the Secretary;

14 “(4) a provision that any financial obligation of  
15 the United States arising out of a contract entered  
16 into under this section and any obligation of the in-  
17 dividual that is conditioned thereon, is contingent on  
18 funds being appropriated for loan repayments under  
19 this section;

20 “(5) a statement of the damages to which the  
21 United States is entitled, under this section for the  
22 individual’s breach of the contract; and

23 “(6) such other statements of the rights and li-  
24 abilities of the Secretary and of the individual as the

1 Secretary determines appropriate, not inconsistent  
2 with this section.

3 “(d) PAYMENTS.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A loan repayment provided  
5 for an individual under a written contract referred  
6 to in subsection (b)(3)(B) shall consist of payment,  
7 in accordance with paragraph (2), on behalf of the  
8 individual of the principal, interest, and related ex-  
9 penses on government and commercial loans received  
10 by the individual regarding the undergraduate or  
11 graduate education of the individual (or both), which  
12 loans were made for tuition expenses incurred by the  
13 individual.

14 “(2) PAYMENTS FOR YEARS SERVED.—For  
15 each year of service that an individual contracts to  
16 serve pursuant to subsection (c)(2), the Secretary  
17 may pay not more than \$35,000 on behalf of the in-  
18 dividual for loans described in paragraph (1). With  
19 respect to participants under the Program whose  
20 total eligible loans are less than \$105,000, the Sec-  
21 retary shall pay an amount that does not exceed  $\frac{1}{3}$   
22 of the eligible loan balance for each year of such  
23 service of such individual.

24 “(3) TAX LIABILITY.—For the purpose of pro-  
25 viding reimbursements for tax liability resulting

1 from payments under paragraph (2) on behalf of an  
2 individual, the Secretary shall, in addition to such  
3 payments, make payments to the individual in an  
4 amount not to exceed 39 percent of the total amount  
5 of loan repayments made for the taxable year in-  
6 volved.

7 “(e) POSTPONING OBLIGATED SERVICE.—With re-  
8 spect to an individual receiving a degree or certificate from  
9 a health professions or other related school, the date of  
10 the initiation of the period of obligated service may be  
11 postponed as approved by the Secretary.

12 “(f) BREACH OF CONTRACT.—An individual who fails  
13 to comply with the contract entered into under subsection  
14 (c) shall be subject to the same financial penalties as pro-  
15 vided for under section 338E of the Public Health Service  
16 Act (42 U.S.C. 254o) for breaches of loan repayment con-  
17 tracts under section 338B of such Act (42 U.S.C. section  
18 254l–1).

19 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
20 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

21 “(1) \$100,000,000 for fiscal year 2020; and

22 “(2) \$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021  
23 through 2025.”

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