

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 2639

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out activities to establish, expand, and sustain a public health nursing workforce, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 27, 2023

Mr. MARKEY introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out activities to establish, expand, and sustain a public health nursing workforce, and for other purposes.

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 Nursing  
5       Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING WORKFORCE.**

2 Part E of title VII of the Public Health Service Act  
3 (42 U.S.C. 294n et seq.) is amended by adding at the end  
4 the following:

5 **“Subpart 4—Public Health Nursing Workforce**

6 **“SEC. 780. PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING WORKFORCE.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out ac-  
8 tivities relating to establishing, expanding, and sustaining  
9 a public health nursing workforce, including by making  
10 grants to State, local, and territorial public health depart-  
11 ments.

12 “(b) USE OF FUNDS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH DEPART-  
13 MENTS.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The recipient of a grant  
15 under subsection (a) shall use the grant funds for  
16 the following:

17 “(A) Costs, including wages and benefits,  
18 relating to the recruiting, hiring, and training  
19 licensed registered nurses—

20 “(i) to serve as public health nurses  
21 providing health care services and edu-  
22 cation regarding preventive health, nutri-  
23 tion, infectious diseases, chronic disease  
24 management, and maternal health, pre-  
25 natal, and postpartum care in order to im-

1           prove maternal and infant health out-  
2           comes;

3           “(ii) who are employed by the State,  
4           territorial, or local public health depart-  
5           ment involved, particularly in medically un-  
6           derserved areas; and

7           “(iii) who work in public health facili-  
8           ties, including mobile health clinics and  
9           acute care hospitals, or who provide home  
10          visitation.

11          “(B) Costs of medical supplies, including  
12          personal protective equipment, necessary to  
13          carry out the activities described in subpara-  
14          graph (A).

15          “(C) Administrative costs and activities re-  
16          lating to grant activities.

17          “(2) SUBGRANTS.—The recipient of a grant  
18          under subsection (a) may make subgrants to local  
19          health departments to be used for the activities de-  
20          scribed in paragraph (1).

21          “(c) PRIORITY.—In selecting recipients of grants  
22          under subsection (a), the Secretary shall give priority to  
23          applicants that—

24                 “(1) propose to serve—

1           “(A) areas with populations that have a  
2 high rate of chronic disease, infant mortality, or  
3 maternal morbidity and mortality;

4           “(B) low-income populations, including  
5 medically underserved populations (as defined  
6 in section 330(b));

7           “(C) populations residing in health profes-  
8 sional shortage areas (as defined in section  
9 332(a));

10           “(D) populations residing in maternity  
11 care health professional target areas identified  
12 under section 332(k); or

13           “(E) rural or traditionally underserved  
14 populations;

15           “(2) demonstrate a plan for providing services,  
16 to the maximum extent practicable, in the language  
17 and cultural context more appropriate to individuals  
18 expected to be served by the program; and

19           “(3) have a documented collective bargaining  
20 agreement with 1 or more labor organizations rep-  
21 resenting employees of the applicant or have an ex-  
22 plicit policy not to interfere with the rights of em-  
23 ployees of the applicant under section 7 of the Na-  
24 tional Labor Relations Act.

1       “(d) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—The recipient of  
2 a grant under subsection (a) shall agree to maintain ex-  
3 penditures of non-Federal amounts for activities described  
4 in subsection (b) at a level that is not less than the level  
5 of such expenditures maintained by the recipient for the  
6 fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the recipient  
7 receives such a grant.

8       “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
9 is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry  
10 out this section \$5,000,000,000 for each of fiscal years  
11 2024 through 2033.”.

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