

JAN 25 2006

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is a serious
2 crisis in medical and dental services in the neighbor islands,
3 particularly for the Med-QUEST and uninsured population. This
4 growing crisis is due to the severe shortage of healthcare
5 providers. The increase in medical malpractice insurance
6 premiums in conjunction with salaries that are ten to twenty per
7 cent lower than on the mainland discourages healthcare
8 professionals from practicing medicine and dentistry in the
9 neighbor islands. Geographic isolation, lack of educational
10 opportunities for providers and their families, and low
11 reimbursement for medical services are other factors
12 contributing to the shortage. The legislature further finds
13 that an incentive program needs to be extended to healthcare
14 professionals to maximize the availability of quality healthcare
15 in the neighbor islands and encourage more healthcare
16 professionals to treat the Med-QUEST and uninsured population.

17 The purpose of this Act is to establish a tuition
18 reimbursement program for University of Hawaii students and



1 graduates in healthcare-related fields requiring them to serve
2 on a neighbor island for a minimum of three consecutive years.

3 SECTION 2. Chapter 304, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
5 and to read as follows:

6 "§304- Healthcare professionals incentive program;
7 tuition reimbursement. (a) There is established a tuition
8 reimbursement program within the University of Hawaii to provide
9 tuition reimbursement to University of Hawaii students and
10 graduates in exchange for three consecutive years of service in
11 a healthcare-related field on a neighbor island.

12 (b) The board of regents shall adopt rules pursuant to
13 chapter 91 to effectuate the purpose of this section. The rules
14 shall address the following concerns:

- 15 (1) Minimum qualifications of applicants;
- 16 (2) Application procedures;
- 17 (3) Criteria for establishing an approved curriculum which
18 meets the intent of this section; including curricula
19 in nursing, medicine, pharmacology, psychology,
20 psychiatry, social work, speech pathology, dentistry,
21 and dental hygiene;



- 1 (4) The amount of tuition reimbursement available each
2 year;
- 3 (5) Criteria for fulfilling an applicant's obligation in
4 the healthcare field;
- 5 (6) Payback criteria and procedures for an applicant who
6 does not fulfill the obligation of three consecutive
7 years of healthcare service on the neighbor islands;
8 provided that the applicant shall not pay less than
9 the tuition for which the applicant was reimbursed;
- 10 (7) Exceptions to payback provisions;
- 11 (8) The limitation, suspension, or revocation of
12 reimbursements; and
- 13 (9) Sanctions against violators of this section or any
14 rule adopted pursuant to this section.
- 15 (c) The tuition reimbursement granted under this section
16 is not cumulative and may not be granted to an applicant who is
17 the recipient of another tuition waiver or reimbursement from
18 the State."

19 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$, or so
21 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007, for
22 the purpose of this Act.

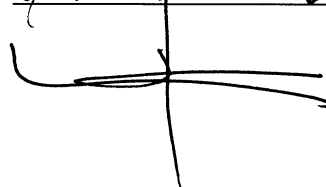
1 SECTION 4. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the
2 University of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

4 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.

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INTRODUCED BY: Shirane Chun Oakland



Clara K. D. ...

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SB. NO. 2618

Report Title:

Healthcare Professionals Incentive; Tuition Reimbursement

Description:

Establishes a tuition reimbursement program within the University of Hawaii as an incentive for healthcare professionals to provide three years' service on the neighbor islands.

