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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii health  
2 corps program was established in 2012 with a focus on  
3 encouraging certain health care providers to serve in counties  
4 that are experiencing shortages of physicians, physician  
5 assistants, and nurse practitioners, with a priority given to a  
6 rural area county.

7           The legislature further finds that since that time, while  
8 the need for these providers in these areas remains, there is an  
9 increased need for a wider range of health care providers, as  
10 well as a pressing need for practitioners in mental health.

11           The legislature further finds that on September 9, 2023,  
12 the State launched the healthcare education loan repayment  
13 program (HELP), a separate program that is alleviating the  
14 educational debt of four hundred ninety-two medical and  
15 healthcare professionals. Because of the expanded scope and  
16 purpose of HELP, the purpose of this Act is to clarify the name  
17 of the Hawaii health corps program and rename it to the Hawaii



1 rural health care provider loan program to better reflect the  
2 purpose of the program.

3 SECTION 2. Section 309H-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
4 amended by amending the definition of "loan repayment" or  
5 "repayment of loan" to read as follows:

6 "Loan repayment" or "repayment of loan" means the payment  
7 of up to twenty per cent of a Hawaii [~~health corps~~] rural health  
8 care provider loan program participant's health care training  
9 costs including but not limited to tuition not exceeding \$35,000  
10 per year for a maximum of five years of repayment."

11 SECTION 3. Section 309H-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
12 amended to read as follows:

13 "**§309H-2 Hawaii [~~health corps~~] rural health care provider**  
14 **loan program established.** The Hawaii [~~health corps~~] rural  
15 health care provider loan program is established to encourage  
16 physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners to  
17 serve in counties having a shortage of physicians, physician  
18 assistants, and nurse practitioners, with priority given to a  
19 rural area county. The Hawaii [~~health corps~~] rural health care  
20 provider loan program shall be administered by the University of  
21 Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine and the University of



1 Hawaii at Manoa school of nursing and dental hygiene. In  
2 administering the program, the University of Hawaii John A.  
3 Burns school of medicine and the University of Hawaii at Manoa  
4 school of nursing and dental hygiene shall:

5 (1) Adopt rules and develop guidelines to administer the  
6 program;

7 (2) Identify and designate areas of the counties where  
8 there is a shortage of physicians, physician  
9 assistants, and nurse practitioners;

10 (3) Establish criteria for the selection by the University  
11 of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine of  
12 physicians, physician assistants, and nurse  
13 practitioners to participate in the Hawaii rural  
14 health care provider loan repayment program;

15 (4) Define and determine compliance with the service  
16 commitments of the Hawaii rural health care provider  
17 loan repayment program;

18 (5) Collect and manage reimbursements from participants  
19 who do not meet their service commitments under the  
20 Hawaii rural health care provider loan repayment  
21 program;



- 1 (6) Publicize the program, particularly to maximize
- 2 participation by individuals who live in areas of a
- 3 county where there is a shortage of physicians,
- 4 physician assistants, and nurse practitioners;
- 5 (7) Solicit and accept grants and donations from public
- 6 and private sources for the Hawaii rural health care
- 7 provider loan repayment program, including maximizing
- 8 the use of federal matching funds; and
- 9 (8) Establish criteria and procedures for calling Hawaii
- 10 ~~[health corps]~~ rural health care loan program
- 11 participants into service during an emergency or
- 12 disaster."

13 SECTION 4. Section 309H-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
 14 amended as follows:

15 1. By amending its title and subsection (a) to read:

16 "[~~§~~§309H-3~~§~~] **Hawaii rural health care provider loan**  
 17 **repayment program.** (a) There is created [~~within the Hawaii~~  
 18 ~~health corps program,~~] the Hawaii rural health care provider  
 19 loan repayment program to be administered by the University of  
 20 Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine and the University of  
 21 Hawaii at Manoa school of nursing and dental hygiene in



1 partnership with a lending financial institution whose  
2 operations are principally conducted in Hawaii. The Hawaii  
3 rural health care provider loan repayment program shall provide  
4 loan repayments to eligible physicians, physician assistants,  
5 and nurse practitioners who make the service commitment under  
6 subsection (b). The University of Hawaii John A. Burns school  
7 of medicine and the University of Hawaii at Manoa school of  
8 nursing and dental hygiene shall make loan repayments directly  
9 to the financial institution under subsection (b) to offset the  
10 loan repayment for which the Hawaii rural health care provider  
11 loan repayment program recipient would otherwise be liable.  
12 Loan repayments shall commence upon the commencement of loan  
13 repayments by the Hawaii rural health care provider loan  
14 repayment program recipient to the lending financial  
15 institution. The University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of  
16 medicine and the University of Hawaii at Manoa school of nursing  
17 and dental hygiene shall prioritize loan repayments in  
18 accordance with the greatest specialty shortages for the  
19 particular county."

20 2. By amending subsection (c) to read:



1           "(c) Eligible participants in the Hawaii rural health care  
2 provider loan [+]repayment[+] program shall be determined by the  
3 University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine and the  
4 University of Hawaii at Manoa school of nursing and dental  
5 hygiene on a competitive basis and in accordance with subsection  
6 (b)."

7           3. By amending subsection (e) to read:

8           "(e) In accordance with chapter 103D, the University of  
9 Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine and the University of  
10 Hawaii at Manoa school of nursing and dental hygiene may enter  
11 into written contracts with collection agencies to collect  
12 delinquent reimbursements of loan repayments. All payments  
13 collected, exclusive of a collection agency's commissions, shall  
14 revert and be credited to the Hawaii [~~health corps~~] rural health  
15 care provider loan fund. A collection agency that enters into a  
16 written contract with the University of Hawaii John A. Burns  
17 school of medicine or the University of Hawaii at Manoa school  
18 of nursing and dental hygiene to collect delinquent  
19 reimbursements of loan repayments pursuant to this section may  
20 collect a commission from the debtor in accordance with the



1 terms of, and up to the amounts authorized in, the written  
2 contract."

3 SECTION 5. Section 309H-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
4 amended to read as follows:

5 "~~§309H-4 Hawaii [health corps]~~ rural health care provider  
6 loan first responder service obligation. If an emergency or  
7 disaster proclaimed under chapter 127A occurs, physicians,  
8 physician assistants, and nurse practitioners participating in  
9 the Hawaii ~~[health corps]~~ rural health care provider loan  
10 program may be ordered into service by the governor as first  
11 responders to serve in areas of the State and in a capacity  
12 determined by the director of health. "

13 SECTION 6. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
14 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

15 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



**Report Title:**

Hawaii Health Corps Program; Hawaii Rural Health Care Provider  
Loan Program; Loan Repayment

**Description:**

Renames the Hawaii Health Corps Program to the Hawaii Rural  
Healthcare Provider Loan Program. (SD1)

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

