

ACT 89

H.B. NO. 1827

A Bill for an Act Relating to Healthcare Workforce Development.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

PART I

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that addressing growing shortages in the State's health care workforce is in the public interest and a key priority for the State. The Healthcare Association of Hawaii found in its 2022 Healthcare Workforce Initiative survey that there are nearly four thousand openings for non-physician, patient-facing positions in the State's hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, and other health care settings. This workforce shortage can make it difficult for the State's residents to access needed care, especially residents on neighbor islands. The shortage was highlighted and worsened by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

The legislature recognizes that the Hawaii Healthcare Workforce Initiative, coordinated by the Healthcare Association of Hawaii, offers numerous workforce development programs to help recruit, train, and employ health care workers. These programs include career-path certificates for high school students and higher education and certification opportunities for nurse aides. These programs have proven successful; however, the programs are largely supported by private donations and time-limited federal grants. Additional funding is necessary to help the initiatives address Hawaii's growing health care workforce needs.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to support the public high school health care workforce certificate program and glidepath

program for certified nurse aides and to renovate and equip certain public high school classrooms to make the classrooms more suitable for health care training.

PART II

SECTION 2. The legislature finds that offering health care training to the State's public high school students will help meet Hawaii's long-term health care workforce needs. The 2022 Healthcare Workforce Initiative survey found that there are more than one thousand five hundred open health care positions in the State that could be filled by students immediately after graduation. The public high school health care workforce certificate program is designed to equip high school graduates to fill entry-level health care positions that pay a living wage and offer opportunities for career advancement. The program assists with the costs of tuition, transportation, work uniforms, and other expenses and offers counseling support and career coaching. The average cost per student is approximately \$4,300, and it is estimated that the program can assist approximately one hundred seventy-five students per year.

Accordingly, the purpose of this part is to appropriate funds to support the public high school health care workforce certificate program.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$750,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 to support the public high school health care workforce certificate program; provided that no funds shall be released unless matched using a state-to-private-funds ratio of 3:1.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of this Act.

PART III

SECTION 4. The legislature finds that preparing high school students for their careers in health care requires an investment in state-of-the-art classrooms. Giving students access to modern, well-equipped classrooms will make the health care field more attractive to students and will allow students to train on equipment that is similar to the equipment that they will use in their future health care roles. Renovated and well-equipped classrooms may also attract more students of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander descent to the health care industry, which will help reduce the educational and economic disparities that exist in these communities. The legislature believes that classroom renovations should be coordinated through a public-private partnership with a nonprofit health care organization.

Accordingly, the purpose of this part is to appropriate funds to renovate and equip certain public high school classrooms to be used for health care training.

SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 as a grant pursuant to chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for Hawaii3R's for renovating and equipping certain public high school classrooms to be used for health care training through the public high school health care workforce certificate program; provided that classroom renovations shall be coordinated through a public-private partnership with a nonprofit health care organization.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of education (EDN200) for the purposes of this Act.

PART IV

SECTION 6. The legislature finds that the State can help build and retain Hawaii's health care workforce by supporting health care workers who want to earn advanced credentials. Without assistance, health care workers may find it difficult to seek continuing education or additional certifications while also working full-time to pay for housing, food, child care, and other necessities. The Healthcare Workforce Initiative's glidepath program for certified nurse aides offers an "earn-and-learn" model that allows nurse aides to become licensed practical nurses while maintaining their full-time jobs in health care. The program provides services including tuition assistance, transportation, counseling, food stipends, and other financial assistance and career advice.

The legislature notes that there is a high demand in the State for licensed practical nurses. They are especially needed in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other senior care settings. The glidepath program for certified nurse aides can assist approximately fifty nurse aides per year in becoming licensed practical nurses.

Accordingly, the purpose of this part is to appropriate funds to support the glidepath program for certified nurse aides.

SECTION 7. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$700,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 to support the glidepath program for certified nurse aides; provided that no funds shall be released unless matched using a state-to-private-funds ratio of 3:1.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of this Act.

PART V

SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

(Approved June 27, 2024.)