

# SENATE BILL 716

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By: **Senators Simonaire and Bailey**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2022

Assigned to: Budget and Taxation and Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Health Care Workers Loan Assistance Program – Establishment**  
3 **and Funding**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Health Care Workers Loan Assistance  
5 Program to provide assistance to health care workers in repaying health  
6 care–related education loans; establishing the Maryland Health Care Workers Loan  
7 Assistance Program Fund; requiring the interest earnings of the Fund to be credited  
8 to the Fund; and generally relating to the Maryland Health Care Workers Loan  
9 Assistance Program.

10 BY adding to

11 Article – Health – General  
12 Section 24–1801 through 24–1807 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 18.  
13 Maryland Health Care Workers Loan Assistance Program”  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

17 Article – State Finance and Procurement  
18 Section 6–226(a)(2)(i)  
19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
20 (2021 Replacement Volume)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

22 Article – State Finance and Procurement  
23 Section 6–226(a)(2)(ii)144. and 145.  
24 Annotated Code of Maryland  
25 (2021 Replacement Volume)

26 BY adding to

27 Article – State Finance and Procurement

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 Section 6–226(a)(2)(ii)146.  
2 Annotated Code of Maryland  
3 (2021 Replacement Volume)

4 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
5 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

6 **Article – Health – General**

7 **SUBTITLE 18. MARYLAND HEALTH CARE WORKERS LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**  
8 **24–1801.**

9 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
10 INDICATED.

11 (B) “FUND” MEANS THE MARYLAND HEALTH CARE WORKERS LOAN  
12 ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUND.

13 (C) “HEALTH CARE WORKER” INCLUDES:

14 (1) AN ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSE, AS DEFINED IN §  
15 8–101 OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE;

16 (2) A NURSE ANESTHETIST, AS DEFINED IN § 8–101 OF THE HEALTH  
17 OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE;

18 (3) A REGISTERED NURSE PRACTITIONER, AS DEFINED IN § 8–101 OF  
19 THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE;

20 (4) A REGISTERED NURSE, AS DEFINED IN § 8–101 OF THE HEALTH  
21 OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE;

22 (5) A LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE, AS DEFINED IN § 8–101 OF THE  
23 HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE;

24 (6) A LICENSED RESPIRATORY CARE PRACTITIONER, AS DEFINED IN  
25 § 14–5A–01 OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE;

26 (7) A PHYSICIAN, AS DEFINED IN § 14–101 OF THE HEALTH  
27 OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE; AND

28 (8) A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT, AS DEFINED IN § 15–101 OF THE  
29 HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE.

1 (D) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE MARYLAND HEALTH CARE WORKERS LOAN  
2 ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

3 24-1802.

4 (A) THERE IS A MARYLAND HEALTH CARE WORKERS LOAN ASSISTANCE  
5 PROGRAM IN THE STATE.

6 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO  
7 HEALTH CARE WORKERS IN REPAYING HEALTH CARE-RELATED EDUCATION LOANS.

8 24-1803.

9 (A) THERE IS A MARYLAND HEALTH CARE WORKERS LOAN ASSISTANCE  
10 PROGRAM FUND IN THE STATE.

11 (B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE FUND.

12 (C) (1) THE FUND IS A CONTINUING, NONLAPSING FUND THAT IS NOT  
13 SUBJECT TO § 7-302 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.

14 (2) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL HOLD THE FUND SEPARATELY,  
15 AND THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ACCOUNT FOR THE FUND.

16 (3) THE FUND SHALL BE INVESTED AND REINVESTED IN THE SAME  
17 MANNER AS OTHER STATE FUNDS.

18 (4) ANY INVESTMENT EARNINGS OF THE FUND SHALL BE PAID INTO  
19 THE FUND.

20 (D) THE FUND CONSISTS OF:

21 (1) MONEY APPROPRIATED IN THE STATE BUDGET TO THE FUND;

22 (2) INTEREST EARNINGS; AND

23 (3) ANY OTHER MONEY FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE ACCEPTED FOR  
24 THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND.

25 (E) THE FUND MAY BE USED ONLY FOR:

26 (1) REPAYMENT OF HEALTH CARE-RELATED EDUCATION LOANS OF

1 HEALTH CARE WORKERS; AND

2 (2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES FOR THE PROGRAM.

3 (F) FOR EACH OF FISCAL YEARS 2024, 2025, AND 2026, THE GOVERNOR  
4 SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$35,000,000  
5 FOR THE FUND.

6 (G) EXPENDITURES FROM THE FUND SHALL BE MADE BY AN  
7 APPROPRIATION IN THE ANNUAL STATE BUDGET OR BY AN APPROVED BUDGET  
8 AMENDMENT AS PROVIDED UNDER § 7-209 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND  
9 PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.

10 24-1804.

11 (A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ASSIST IN THE REPAYMENT, WITH THE FUNDS  
12 TRANSFERRED TO THE DEPARTMENT BY THE COMPTROLLER UNDER § 24-1803 OF  
13 THIS SUBTITLE, OF UP TO \$10,000 TOWARD THE AMOUNT OF HEALTH  
14 CARE-RELATED EDUCATION LOANS OWED BY A HEALTH CARE WORKER WHO MEETS  
15 THE QUALIFICATIONS UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION.

16 (B) TO QUALIFY FOR REPAYMENT OF A HEALTH CARE-RELATED  
17 EDUCATION LOAN UNDER THE PROGRAM, AN APPLICANT SHALL:

18 (1) BE A HEALTH CARE WORKER;

19 (2) HAVE PRACTICED A HEALTH OCCUPATION CONTINUOUSLY IN THE  
20 STATE BEGINNING ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2021;

21 (3) OWE ON A HEALTH CARE-RELATED EDUCATION LOAN; AND

22 (4) MEET ANY OTHER QUALIFICATIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE  
23 DEPARTMENT.

24 24-1805.

25 (A) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH A SINGLE APPLICATION  
26 PERIOD FOR THE PROGRAM DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF THE PROGRAM.

27 (2) AFTER THE APPLICATION PERIOD CLOSES, THE DEPARTMENT  
28 SHALL DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF REPAYMENT FOR EACH QUALIFIED APPLICANT  
29 BASED ON THE NUMBER OF QUALIFIED APPLICANTS AND THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF  
30 MONEY IN THE FUND FOR THE 3-YEAR DURATION OF THE PROGRAM.

1           **(3) THE REPAYMENT AMOUNT FOR A QUALIFIED APPLICANT UNDER**  
2 **THIS SUBSECTION:**

3                   **(I) MAY BE UP TO \$10,000; BUT**

4                   **(II) MAY NOT EXCEED THE AMOUNT OF THE HEALTH**  
5 **CARE-RELATED EDUCATION LOAN.**

6           **(B) TO APPLY FOR REPAYMENT OF A HEALTH CARE-RELATED EDUCATION**  
7 **LOAN UNDER THE PROGRAM, AN APPLICANT SHALL SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO**  
8 **THE DEPARTMENT ON THE FORM THAT THE DEPARTMENT REQUIRES, INCLUDING**  
9 **SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE OF QUALIFYING EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION LOANS,**  
10 **DURING THE APPLICATION PERIOD ESTABLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER**  
11 **SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.**

12           **(C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DIVIDE AN APPLICANT'S LOAN**  
13 **REPAYMENT AMOUNT SO THAT AN EQUAL AMOUNT IS PAID IN EACH OF THE 3 YEARS**  
14 **THAT THE PROGRAM IS IN EFFECT.**

15                   **(2) IF THE AMOUNT OF THE REPAYMENT FOR AN APPLICANT UNDER**  
16 **SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION IS LESS THAN \$10,000, THE DEPARTMENT MAY**  
17 **ALLOCATE AN AMOUNT TO THE APPLICANT FOR REPAYMENT IN LESS THAN 3 YEARS.**

18           **(D) ANY UNSPENT PORTION OF THE MONEY THAT IS TRANSFERRED TO THE**  
19 **DEPARTMENT FOR USE UNDER THIS SUBTITLE SHALL BE TRANSFERRED OR REVERT**  
20 **TO THE GENERAL FUND OF THE STATE UNTIL THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR.**

21 **24-1806.**

22           **ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2022, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT**  
23 **REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

24 **24-1807.**

25           **ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2023, THROUGH 2026, THE DEPARTMENT**  
26 **SHALL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF**  
27 **THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, ON:**

28                   **(1) THE NUMBER OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS WHO APPLIED FOR AND**  
29 **QUALIFIED FOR THE PROGRAM;**

30                   **(2) THE AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO EACH QUALIFIED**

1 APPLICANT; AND

2 (3) THE HEALTH OCCUPATION OF THE PARTICIPATING HEALTH CARE  
3 WORKERS.

4 Article – State Finance and Procurement

5 6–226.

6 (a) (2) (i) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and unless  
7 inconsistent with a federal law, grant agreement, or other federal requirement or with the  
8 terms of a gift or settlement agreement, net interest on all State money allocated by the  
9 State Treasurer under this section to special funds or accounts, and otherwise entitled to  
10 receive interest earnings, as accounted for by the Comptroller, shall accrue to the General  
11 Fund of the State.

12 (ii) The provisions of subparagraph (i) of this paragraph do not apply  
13 to the following funds:

14 144. the Health Equity Resource Community Reserve Fund;  
15 [and]

16 145. the Access to Counsel in Evictions Special Fund; AND

17 146. THE MARYLAND HEALTH CARE WORKERS LOAN  
18 ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUND.

19 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
20 1, 2022. It shall remain effective for a period of 4 years and 4 months and, at the end of  
21 September 30, 2026, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly,  
22 shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.