

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 605

To amend the Public Health Service Act to promote and improve the allied health professions.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 15, 2007

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mrs. MURRAY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to promote and improve the allied health professions.

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 “Allied Health Reinvest-
5 ment Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
8 ings:

1 (1) The United States Census Bureau and
2 other reports highlight the increased demand for
3 acute and chronic health care services among both
4 the general population and a rapidly growing aging
5 portion of the population.

6 (2) The calls for reduction in medical errors, in-
7 creased patient safety, and quality of care have re-
8 sulted in an amplified call for allied health profes-
9 sionals to provide health care services.

10 (3) Several allied health professions are charac-
11 terized by workforce shortages, declining enrollments
12 in allied health education programs, or a combina-
13 tion of both factors, and hospital officials have re-
14 ported vacancy rates in positions occupied by allied
15 health professionals.

16 (4) Many allied health education programs are
17 facing significant economic pressure that could force
18 their closure due to an insufficient number of stu-
19 dents.

20 (b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to pro-
21 vide incentives for individuals to seek and complete high
22 quality allied health education and training and provide
23 additional funding to ensure that such education and
24 training can be provided to allied health students so that
25 the United States health care industry will have a supply

1 of allied health professionals needed to support the health
 2 care system of the United States in this decade and be-
 3 yond.

4 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENT TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE**
 5 **ACT.**

6 Title VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.
 7 292 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 8 lowing:

9 **“PART G—ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS**

10 **“SEC. 799C. DEFINITIONS.**

11 “In this part:

12 “(1) ALLIED HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM.—

13 The term ‘allied health education program’ means
 14 any postsecondary educational program offered by
 15 an institution accredited by an agency or commission
 16 recognized by the Department of Education, or lead-
 17 ing to a State certificate or license or any other edu-
 18 cational program approved by the Secretary. Such
 19 term includes colleges, universities, or schools of al-
 20 lied health and equivalent entities that include pro-
 21 grams leading to a certificate, associate, baccalaureate,
 22 or graduate level degree in an allied health
 23 profession.

24 “(2) ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS.—The
 25 term ‘allied health professions’ includes professions

1 in the following areas at the certificate, associate,
2 baccalaureate, or graduate level:

3 “(A) Dental hygiene.

4 “(B) Dietetics or nutrition.

5 “(C) Emergency medical services.

6 “(D) Health information management.

7 “(E) Clinical laboratory sciences and med-
8 ical technology.

9 “(F) Cytotechnology.

10 “(G) Occupational therapy.

11 “(H) Physical therapy.

12 “(I) Radiologic technology.

13 “(J) Nuclear medical technology.

14 “(K) Rehabilitation counseling.

15 “(L) Respiratory therapy.

16 “(M) Speech-language pathology and audi-
17 ology.

18 “(N) Any other profession determined ap-
19 propriate by the Secretary.

20 “(3) HEALTH CARE FACILITY.—The term
21 ‘health care facility’ means an outpatient health care
22 facility, hospital, nursing home, home health care
23 agency, hospice, federally qualified health center,
24 nurse managed health center, rural health clinic,
25 public health clinic, or any similar health care facil-

1 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—To be eligible to receive a
2 grant under subsection (a), an entity shall—

3 “(1) be a professional, national, or State allied
4 health association, State health care provider, or as-
5 sociation of one or more health care facilities, allied
6 health education programs, or other entities that
7 provides similar services or serves a like function;
8 and

9 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
10 application at such time, in such manner, and con-
11 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
12 quire.

13 **“SEC. 799C-3. ALLIED HEALTH RECRUITMENT GRANT PRO-**
14 **GRAM.**

15 “(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary shall
16 award grants to eligible entities to increase allied health
17 professions education opportunities.

18 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—To be eligible to receive a
19 grant under subsection (a), an entity shall—

20 “(1) be a professional, national, or State allied
21 health association, State health care provider, or as-
22 sociation of one or more health care facilities, allied
23 health education programs, or other eligible entities
24 that provides similar services or serves a like func-
25 tion; and

1 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
2 application at such time, in such manner, and con-
3 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
4 quire.

5 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity shall use amounts
6 received under a grant under subsection (a) to—

7 “(1) support outreach programs at elementary
8 and secondary schools that inform guidance coun-
9 selors and students of education opportunities re-
10 garding the allied health professions;

11 “(2) carry out special projects to increase allied
12 health education opportunities for individuals who
13 are from disadvantaged backgrounds (including ra-
14 cial and ethnic minorities that are underrepresented
15 among the allied health professions) by providing
16 student scholarships or stipends, pre-entry prepara-
17 tion, and retention activities;

18 “(3) provide assistance to public and nonprofit
19 private educational institutions to support remedial
20 education programs for allied health students who
21 require assistance with math, science, English, and
22 medical terminology;

23 “(4) meet the costs of child care and transpor-
24 tation for individuals who are taking part in an al-
25 lied health education program at any level; and

1 “(5) support community-based partnerships
2 seeking to recruit allied health professionals in rural
3 communities and medically underserved urban com-
4 munities, and other communities experiencing an al-
5 lied health professions shortage.

6 **“SEC. 799C-4. GRANTS FOR HEALTH CAREER ACADEMIES.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
8 grants to eligible entities to assist such entities in collabo-
9 rating to carry out programs that form education pipelines
10 to facilitate the entry of students of secondary educational
11 institutions, especially underrepresented racial and ethnic
12 minorities, into careers in the allied health professions.

13 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—To be eligible to receive a
14 grant under subsection (a), an entity shall—

15 “(1) be an institution that offers allied health
16 education programs, a health care facility, or a sec-
17 ondary educational institution; and

18 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
19 application at such time, in such manner, and con-
20 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
21 quire.

1 **“SEC. 799C-5. ALLIED HEALTH EDUCATION, PRACTICE, AND**
2 **RETENTION GRANTS.**

3 “(a) EDUCATION PRIORITY AREAS.—The Secretary
4 may award grants to or enter into contracts with eligible
5 entities to—

6 “(1) expand the enrollment of individuals in al-
7 lied health education programs, especially the enroll-
8 ment of underrepresented racial and ethnic minority
9 students; and

10 “(2) provide education through new tech-
11 nologies and methods, including distance-learning
12 methodologies.

13 “(b) PRACTICE PRIORITY AREAS.—The Secretary
14 may award grants to or enter into contracts with eligible
15 entities to—

16 “(1) establish or expand allied health practice
17 arrangements in noninstitutional settings to dem-
18 onstrate methods to improve access to primary
19 health care in rural areas and other medically under-
20 served communities;

21 “(2) provide care for underserved populations
22 and other high-risk groups such as the elderly, indi-
23 viduals with HIV/AIDS, substance abusers, the
24 homeless, and victims of domestic violence;

25 “(3) provide managed care, information man-
26 agement, quality improvement, and other skills need-

1 ed to practice in existing and emerging organized
2 health care systems; or

3 “(4) develop generational and cultural com-
4 petencies among allied health professionals.

5 “(c) RETENTION PRIORITY AREAS.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award
7 grants to and enter into contracts with eligible enti-
8 ties to enhance the allied health professions work-
9 force by initiating and maintaining allied health re-
10 tention programs described in paragraph (2) or (3).

11 “(2) GRANTS FOR CAREER LADDER PRO-
12 GRAMS.—The Secretary may award grants to and
13 enter into contracts with eligible entities for pro-
14 grams—

15 “(A) to promote career advancement for
16 allied health personnel in a variety of training
17 settings, cross training or specialty training
18 among diverse population groups, and the ad-
19 vancement of individuals; and

20 “(B) to assist individuals in obtaining the
21 education and training required to enter the al-
22 lied health professions and advance within such
23 professions, such as by providing career coun-
24 seling and mentoring.

1 “(3) ENHANCING PATIENT CARE DELIVERY
2 SYSTEMS.—

3 “(A) GRANTS.—The Secretary may award
4 grants to eligible entities to improve the reten-
5 tion of allied health professionals and to en-
6 hance patient care that is directly related to al-
7 lied health activities by enhancing collaboration
8 and communication among allied health profes-
9 sionals and other health care professionals, and
10 by promoting allied health involvement in the
11 organizational and clinical decision-making
12 processes of a health care facility.

13 “(B) PREFERENCE.—In making awards of
14 grants under this paragraph, the Secretary
15 shall give preferences to applicants that have
16 not previously received an award under this
17 paragraph and to applicants from rural, under-
18 served areas.

19 “(C) CONTINUATION OF AN AWARD.—The
20 Secretary shall make continuation of any award
21 under this paragraph beyond the second year of
22 such award contingent on the recipient of such
23 award having demonstrated to the Secretary
24 measurable and substantive improvement in al-
25 lied health personnel retention or patient care.

1 “(d) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—To be eligible to receive a
2 grant under this section, an entity shall—

3 “(1) be a health care facility, or any partner-
4 ship or coalition containing a health care facility or
5 allied health education program; and

6 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
7 application at such time, in such manner, and con-
8 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
9 quire.

10 **“SEC. 799C-6. DEVELOPING MODELS AND BEST PRACTICES**
11 **PROGRAM.**

12 “(a) **AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary shall award
13 grants to eligible entities to enable such entities to carry
14 out demonstration programs using models and best prac-
15 tices in allied health for the purpose of developing innova-
16 tive strategies or approaches for the retention of allied
17 health professionals.

18 “(b) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—To be eligible to receive a
19 grant under this section, an entity shall—

20 “(1) be a health care facility, or any partner-
21 ship or coalition containing a health care facility or
22 allied health education program; and

23 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
24 application at such time, in such manner, and con-

1 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
2 quire.

3 “(c) DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS.—In awarding
4 grants under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that
5 grantees represent a variety of geographic regions and a
6 range of different types and sizes of facilities, including
7 facilities located in rural, urban, and suburban areas.

8 “(d) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity shall use amounts
9 received under a grant under this section to carry out
10 demonstration programs of models and best practices in
11 allied health for the purpose of—

12 “(1) promoting retention and satisfaction of al-
13 lied health professionals;

14 “(2) promoting opportunities for allied health
15 professionals to pursue education, career advance-
16 ment, and organizational recognition; and

17 “(3) developing continuing education programs
18 that instruct allied health professionals in how to
19 use emerging medical technologies and how to ad-
20 dress current and future health care needs.

21 “(e) AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTERS.—The
22 Secretary shall award grants to area health education cen-
23 ters to enable such centers to enter into contracts with
24 allied health education programs to expand the operation
25 of area health education centers to work in communities

1 to develop models of excellence for allied health profes-
2 sionals or to expand any junior and senior high school
3 mentoring programs to include an allied health professions
4 mentoring program.

5 **“SEC. 799C-7. ALLIED HEALTH FACULTY LOAN PROGRAM.**

6 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary, acting
7 through the Administrator of the Health Resources and
8 Services Administration, may enter into an agreement
9 with any institution offering an eligible allied health edu-
10 cation program for the establishment and operation of a
11 faculty loan fund in accordance with this section (referred
12 to in this section as the ‘loan fund’), to increase the num-
13 ber of qualified allied health faculty.

14 “(b) AGREEMENTS.—Each agreement entered into
15 under this section shall—

16 “(1) provide for the establishment of a loan
17 fund by the institution offering the allied health edu-
18 cation program involved;

19 “(2) provide for deposit in the loan fund of—

20 “(A) the Federal capital contributions to
21 the fund;

22 “(B) an amount provided by the institution
23 involved which shall be equal to not less than
24 one-ninth of the amount of the Federal capital
25 contribution under subparagraph (A);

1 “(C) any collections of principal and inter-
2 est on loans made from the fund; and

3 “(D) any other earnings of the fund;

4 “(3) provide that the loan fund will be used
5 only for the provision of loans to faculty of the allied
6 health education program in accordance with sub-
7 section (c) and for the costs of the collection of such
8 loans and the interest thereon;

9 “(4) provide that loans may be made from such
10 fund only to faculty who are pursuing a full-time
11 course of study or, at the discretion of the Secretary,
12 a part-time course of study in an advanced degree
13 program; and

14 “(5) contain such other provisions determined
15 appropriate by the Secretary to protect the financial
16 interests of the United States.

17 “(c) LOAN PROVISIONS.—Loans from any faculty
18 loan fund established pursuant to an agreement under this
19 section shall be made to an individual on such terms and
20 conditions as the allied health education program may de-
21 termine, except that—

22 “(1) such terms and conditions are subject to
23 any conditions, limitations, and requirements pre-
24 scribed by the Secretary;

1 “(2) in the case of any individual, the total of
2 the loans for any academic year made by an allied
3 health education program from loan funds estab-
4 lished pursuant to agreements under this section
5 may not exceed \$30,000, plus any amount deter-
6 mined by the Secretary on an annual basis to reflect
7 inflation;

8 “(3) upon completion by the individual of each
9 of the first, second, and third year of full-time em-
10 ployment, as required under the loan agreement, as
11 a faculty member in an allied health education pro-
12 gram, the program shall cancel 20 percent of the
13 principal and interest due on the amount of the un-
14 paid portion of the loan on the first day of such em-
15 ployment;

16 “(4) upon completion by the individual of the
17 fourth year of full-time employment, as required
18 under the loan agreement, as a faculty member in
19 an allied health education program, the program
20 shall cancel 25 percent of the principal and interest
21 due on the amount of the unpaid portion of the loan
22 on the first day of such employment;

23 “(5) the loan may be used to pay the cost of
24 tuition, fees, books, laboratory expenses, and other
25 reasonable education expenses;

1 “(6) the loan shall be repayable in equal or
2 graduated periodic installments (with the right of
3 the borrower to accelerate repayment) over the 10-
4 year period that begins 9 months after the individual
5 ceases to pursue a course of study in an allied health
6 education program; and

7 “(7) such loan shall—

8 “(A) beginning on the date that is 3
9 months after the individual ceases to pursue a
10 course of study in an allied health education
11 program, bear interest on the unpaid balance of
12 the loan at the rate of 3 percent per year; or

13 “(B) subject to subsection (e), if the allied
14 health education program determines that the
15 individual will not complete such course of
16 study or serve as a faculty member as required
17 under the loan agreement under this subsection,
18 bear interest on the unpaid balance of the loan
19 at the prevailing market rate.

20 “(d) PAYMENT OF PROPORTIONATE SHARE.—Where
21 all or any part of a loan (including interest thereon) is
22 canceled under this section, the Secretary shall pay to the
23 allied health education program involved an amount equal
24 to the program’s proportionate share of the canceled por-
25 tion, as determined by the Secretary.

1 “(e) REVIEW BY SECRETARY.—At the request of the
2 individual involved, the Secretary may review any deter-
3 mination by an allied health education program under this
4 section.

5 **“SEC. 799C-8. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR SERVICE IN**
6 **RURAL AND OTHER MEDICALLY UNDER-**
7 **SERVED AREAS.**

8 “(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary shall
9 establish a scholarship program (referred to in this section
10 as the ‘program’) to provide scholarships to individuals
11 seeking allied health education who agree to provide serv-
12 ice in rural and other medically underserved areas with
13 allied health personnel shortages.

14 “(b) PREFERENCE.—In awarding scholarships under
15 this section, the Secretary shall give preference to—

16 “(1) applicants who demonstrate the greatest
17 financial need;

18 “(2) applicants who agree to serve in health
19 care facilities experiencing allied health shortages in
20 rural and other medically underserved areas;

21 “(3) applicants who are currently working in a
22 health care facility who agree to serve the period of
23 obligated service at such facility;

24 “(4) minority applicants; and

1 “(5) applicants with an interest in a practice
2 area of allied health that has unmet needs.

3 “(c) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—

4 “(1) CONTRACTS.—Under the program, the
5 Secretary shall enter into contracts with eligible in-
6 dividuals under which such individuals agree to serve
7 as allied health professionals for a period of not less
8 than 2 years at a health care facility with a critical
9 shortage of allied health professionals in consider-
10 ation of the Federal Government agreeing to provide
11 to the individuals scholarships for attendance in an
12 allied health education program.

13 “(2) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—In this sub-
14 section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means an indi-
15 vidual who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment as
16 a full-time or part-time student in an allied health
17 education program.

18 “(3) SERVICE REQUIREMENT.—

19 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
20 not enter into a contract with an eligible indi-
21 vidual under this section unless the individual
22 agrees to serve as an allied health professional
23 at a health care facility with a critical shortage
24 of allied health professionals for a period of
25 full-time service of not less than 2 years, or for

1 a period of part-time service in accordance with
2 subparagraph (B).

3 “(B) PART-TIME SERVICE.—An individual
4 may complete the period of service described in
5 subparagraph (A) on a part-time basis if the in-
6 dividual has a written agreement that—

7 “(i) is entered into by the facility and
8 the individual and is approved by the Sec-
9 retary; and

10 “(ii) provides that the period of obli-
11 gated service will be extended so that the
12 aggregate amount of service performed will
13 equal the amount of service that would be
14 performed through a period of full-time
15 service of not less than 2 years.

16 “(d) REPORTS.—Not later than 18 months after the
17 date of enactment of this part, and annually thereafter,
18 the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the appropriate
19 committees of Congress a report describing the program
20 carried out under this section, including statements re-
21 garding—

22 “(1) the number of enrollees by specialty or dis-
23 cipline, scholarships, and grant recipients;

24 “(2) the number of graduates;

25 “(3) the amount of scholarship payments made;

1 “(4) which educational institution the recipients
2 attended;

3 “(5) the number and placement location of the
4 scholarship recipients at health care facilities with a
5 critical shortage of allied health professionals;

6 “(6) the default rate and actions required;

7 “(7) the amount of outstanding default funds of
8 the scholarship program;

9 “(8) to the extent that it can be determined,
10 the reason for the default;

11 “(9) the demographics of the individuals par-
12 ticipating in the scholarship program; and

13 “(10) an evaluation of the overall costs and
14 benefits of the program.

15 **“SEC. 799C-9. GRANTS FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION, INTERN-
16 SHIP, AND RESIDENCY PROGRAMS.**

17 “(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary shall
18 award grants to eligible entities to develop clinical edu-
19 cation, internship, and residency programs that encourage
20 mentoring and the development of specialties.

21 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible for a grant
22 under this section an entity shall—

23 “(1) be a partnership of an allied health edu-
24 cation program and a health care facility; and

1 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
2 application at such time, in such manner, and con-
3 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
4 quire.

5 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use
6 amounts received under a grant under this section to—

7 “(1) develop clinical education, internship, and
8 residency programs and curriculum and training
9 programs for graduates of an allied health education
10 program;

11 “(2) provide support for faculty and mentors;
12 and

13 “(3) provide support for allied health profes-
14 sionals participating in clinical education, internship,
15 and residency programs on both a full-time and
16 part-time basis.

17 **“SEC. 799C-10. GRANTS FOR PARTNERSHIPS.**

18 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
19 grants to eligible entities to enable such entities to form
20 partnerships to carry out the activities described in this
21 section.

22 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—To be eligible to receive a
23 grant under this section, an entity shall—

24 “(1) be a partnership between an allied health
25 education program and a health care facility; and

1 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
2 application at such time, in such manner, and con-
3 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
4 quire.

5 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use
6 amounts received under a grant under this section to—

7 “(1) provide employees of the health care facil-
8 ity that is a member of the partnership involved ad-
9 vanced training and education in a allied health edu-
10 cation program;

11 “(2) establish or expand allied health practice
12 arrangements in non-institutional settings to dem-
13 onstrate methods to improve access to health care in
14 rural and other medically underserved communities;

15 “(3) purchase distance learning technology to
16 extend general education and training programs to
17 rural areas, and to extend specialty education and
18 training programs to all areas; and

19 “(4) establish or expand mentoring, clinical
20 education, and internship programs for training in
21 specialty care areas.

22 **“SEC. 799C-11. ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS TRAINING**
23 **FOR DIVERSITY.**

24 “The Secretary, acting in conjunction with allied
25 health professional associations, shall develop a system for

1 collecting and analyzing allied health workforce data gath-
2 ered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Health Re-
3 sources and Services Administration, other entities within
4 the Department of Health and Human Services, the De-
5 partment of Veterans Affairs, the Centers for Medicare
6 & Medicaid Services, the Department of Defense, allied
7 health professional associations, and regional centers for
8 health workforce studies to determine educational pipeline
9 and practitioner shortages, and project future needs for
10 such a workforce.

11 **“SEC. 799C-12. ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS TRAINING**
12 **FOR DIVERSITY.**

13 “The Secretary shall include schools of allied health
14 among the health professions schools that are eligible to
15 receive grants under this part for the purpose of assisting
16 such schools in supporting Centers of Excellence in health
17 professions education for under-represented minority indi-
18 viduals.

19 **“SEC. 799C-13. REPORTS BY GENERAL ACCOUNTING OF-**
20 **FICE.**

21 “Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment
22 of this part, the Comptroller General of the United States
23 shall conduct an evaluation of whether the programs car-
24 ried out under this part have demonstrably increased the
25 number of applicants to allied health education programs

1 and prepare and submit to the appropriate committees of
2 Congress a report concerning the results of such evalua-
3 tion.

4 **“SEC. 799C-14. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

5 “There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
6 this part, such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal
7 years 2008 through 2013.”.

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