

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

FOR

Senate Bill No. 422

(By Senators Plymale, Kessler (Mr. President), Kirkendoll,
Stollings and Cookman)

[Originating in the Committee on Finance;
reported February 12, 2014.]

A BILL to amend and reenact §18C-3-2 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to providing state aid for certain students pursuing certain degrees; requiring a service commitment to state for future students; setting forth alternatives to service; requiring legislative rule; and specifying rule provisions.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That §18C-3-2 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted to read as follows:

**ARTICLE 3. HEALTH PROFESSIONALS STUDENT LOAN
PROGRAMS.**

**§18C-3-2. State aid for students of optometry, podiatry or
veterinary medicine.**

1 (a) The ~~board of trustees is hereby~~ commission is
2 authorized to enter into ~~a contract~~ contracts with an
3 educational institution or institutions outside the state that
4 offer training in optometry, podiatry or veterinary medicine
5 by the terms of which the ~~board of trustees~~ commission may
6 obligate itself to pay the institution, within the limits of any
7 appropriation made for the purpose, a stated amount per year
8 for each West Virginia student the institution will agree to
9 accept for training in optometry, podiatry or veterinary
10 medicine.

11 (b) Each year the ~~board of trustees~~ commission shall ~~each~~
12 ~~year~~ send to any ~~such~~ appropriate institution a certified list of
13 all persons applying to the ~~trustees~~ commission for training
14 in optometry, podiatry or veterinary medicine who are bona
15 fide citizens and residents of this state prior to ~~the~~ filing of

16 their applications, and who have completed either within or
17 without the state the course of study required by the
18 institution as a prerequisite to the study of optometry,
19 podiatry or veterinary medicine.

20 (c) Upon graduation from an educational institution for
21 study of optometry, podiatry or veterinary medicine, a person
22 who receives state aid under this section is required to:

23 (1) Practice full time in this state in the field for which he
24 or she obtained financial aid, one year for every year the
25 student received aid under this section; or

26 (2) Reimburse the commission for the amount received
27 under this section.

28 (d) The commission shall propose a legislative rule in
29 accordance with the provisions of article three-a, chapter
30 twenty-nine-a of this code to implement the provisions of this
31 section. The rule shall address at least the following items:

32 (1) Eligibility and selection criteria;

33 (2) Reimbursement and repayment;

34 (3) Forgiveness options for death or disability;

35 (4) Forgiveness or deferment options for continuing
36 education in the field of study;

37 (5) Terms of an agreement to which the student must
38 agree; and

39 (6) An appeal process.

40 (e) The provisions of subsection (c) of this section apply
41 only to those students entering into an agreement to receive
42 state aid to study optometry, podiatry or veterinary medicine
43 on or after July 1, 2015.

44 (f) If considered necessary by the commission, the
45 provisions of this section may be extended by legislative rule
46 to other professional degrees which are not provided in the
47 state, but which are needed to enhance the state's economy.