

**H. B. 2976**

(By Delegates Pasdon, Perry, Rohrbach, Campbell and Ellington)

[Introduced February 24, 2015; referred to the

Committee on Education.]

A BILL to amend and reenact §18C-3-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to expanding the eligible master's and doctoral level programs for which a Nursing Scholarship may be awarded.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

That §18C-3-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted, all to read as follows:

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

**§18C-3-4. Nursing Scholarship Program; Center for Nursing Fund; administration; scholarship awards; service requirements.**

(a) There is continued in the State Treasury a special revenue account known as the "Center for Nursing Fund" to be administered by the commission to implement the provisions of this section and article seven-b, chapter thirty of this code. Any moneys in the account on the effective date of this section are transferred to the commission's administrative authority. Balances remaining in the

1 fund at the end of the fiscal year do not expire or revert to the general revenue. All costs associated  
2 with the administration of this section and article seven-b, chapter thirty of this code shall be paid  
3 from the Center for Nursing Fund under the direction of the Vice Chancellor for Administration.  
4 Administrative costs are to be minimized and the maximum amount feasible is to be used to fund  
5 awards for students in nursing programs.

6 (b) The account is funded from the following sources:

7 (1) A supplemental licensure fee, not to exceed \$10 per year, to be paid by all nurses licensed  
8 by the Board of Examiners for Registered Professional Nurses, pursuant to section eight-a, article  
9 seven, chapter thirty of this code, and the Board of Examiners for Licensed Practical Nurses,  
10 pursuant to section seven-a, article seven-a, chapter thirty of this code;

11 (2) Repayments, including interest as set by the Vice Chancellor for Administration, collected  
12 from recipients who fail to practice or teach in West Virginia under the terms of the scholarship  
13 agreement; and

14 (3) Any other funds from any source as may be added to the account.

15 (c) In consultation with the board of directors of the West Virginia Center for Nursing,  
16 established pursuant to article seven-b, chapter thirty of this code, the commission shall administer  
17 a scholarship, designated the "Nursing Scholarship Program", designed to benefit nurses who  
18 practice in hospitals and other health care institutions or teach in state nursing programs.

19 (1) Awards are available for students enrolled in accredited nursing programs in West  
20 Virginia. A recipient shall execute an agreement to fulfill a service requirement or repay the amount  
21 of any award received.

22 (2) Awards are made as follows, subject to the rule required by this section:

1 (A) An award for any student may not exceed the full cost of education for program  
2 completion;

3 (B) An award of up to \$3,000 is available for a student in a licensed practical nurse education  
4 program. A recipient is required to practice nursing in West Virginia for one year following program  
5 completion;

6 (C) An award of up to \$7,500 is available for a student who has completed one-half of a  
7 registered nurse education program. A recipient is required to teach or practice nursing in West  
8 Virginia for two years following program completion.

9 (D) An award of up to \$15,000 is available to a student in a nursing ~~education~~ master's degree  
10 program or a doctoral nursing or education program. A recipient is required to teach in West  
11 Virginia for two years following program completion.

12 (E) An award of up to \$1,000 per year is available for a student obtaining a licensed practical  
13 nurse teaching certificate. A recipient is required to teach in West Virginia for one year per award  
14 received.

15 (d) An award recipient shall satisfy one of the following conditions:

16 (1) Fulfill the service requirement pursuant to this section and the legislative rule; or

17 (2) Repay the commission for the amount awarded, together with accrued interest as  
18 stipulated in the service agreement.

19 (e) The commission shall promulgate a rule for legislative approval pursuant to article  
20 three-a, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to implement and administer this section. ~~The Legislature~~  
21 ~~finds that an emergency exists, and, therefore, the commission shall propose an emergency rule~~  
22 ~~pursuant to article three-a, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code by August 1, 2014.~~ The ~~rules~~ rule shall

1 provide for the following:

2 (1) Eligibility and selection criteria for program participation;

3 (2) Terms of a service agreement which a recipient shall execute as a condition of receiving  
4 an award;

5 (3) Repayment provisions for a recipient who fails to fulfill the service requirement;

6 (4) Forgiveness options for death or disability of a recipient;

7 (5) An appeal process for students denied participation or ordered to repay awards; and

8 (6) Additional provisions as necessary to implement this section.

9 (f) The commission shall report annually by December 1, ~~2014, and annually thereafter~~, to  
10 the Legislative Oversight Commission on Health and Human Resources Accountability and the  
11 Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability on the number of award recipients  
12 and all other matters relevant to the provisions of this section.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to expand the eligible master's and doctoral level programs for which a nursing scholarship may be awarded.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.