

H. B. 2976

(BY DELEGATE(S) 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.

1 (a) There is continued in the State Treasury a special revenue
2 account known as the “Center for Nursing Fund” to be
3 administered by the commission to implement the provisions of
4 this section and article seven-b, chapter thirty of this code. Any
5 moneys in the account on the effective date of this section are
6 transferred to the commission’s administrative authority.
7 Balances remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal year do
8 not expire or revert to the general revenue. All costs associated
9 with the administration of this section and article seven-b,
10 chapter thirty of this code shall be paid from the Center for
11 Nursing Fund under the direction of the Vice Chancellor for
12 Administration. Administrative costs are to be minimized and
13 the maximum amount feasible is to be used to fund awards for
14 students in nursing programs.

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

16 (1) A supplemental licensure fee, not to exceed \$10 per year,
17 to be paid by all nurses licensed by the Board of Examiners for

18 Registered Professional Nurses, pursuant to section eight-a,
19 article seven, chapter thirty of this code, and the Board of
20 Examiners for Licensed Practical Nurses, pursuant to section
21 seven-a, article seven-a, chapter thirty of this code;

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

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

28 (c) In consultation with the board of directors of the West
29 Virginia Center for Nursing, established pursuant to article
30 seven-b, chapter thirty of this code, the commission shall
31 administer a scholarship, designated the “Nursing Scholarship
32 Program”, designed to benefit nurses who practice in hospitals
33 and other health care institutions or teach in state nursing
34 programs.

35 (1) Awards are available for students enrolled in accredited
36 nursing programs in West Virginia. A recipient shall execute an

37 agreement to fulfill a service requirement or repay the amount of
38 any award received.

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

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

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

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

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

55 (E) An award of up to \$1,000 per year is available for a
56 student obtaining a licensed practical nurse teaching certificate.

57 A recipient is required to teach in West Virginia for one year per
58 award received.

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

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

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

65 (e) The commission shall promulgate a rule for legislative
66 approval pursuant to article three-a, chapter twenty-nine-a of this
67 code to implement and administer this section. ~~The Legislature~~
68 ~~finds that an emergency exists, and, therefore, the commission~~
69 ~~shall propose an emergency rule pursuant to article three-a,~~
70 ~~chapter twenty-nine-a of this code by August 1, 2014. The rules~~
71 rule shall provide for the following:

72 (1) Eligibility and selection criteria for program
73 participation;

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

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

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

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

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

83 (f) The commission shall report annually by December 1,
84 ~~2014, and annually thereafter~~, to the Legislative Oversight
85 Commission on Health and Human Resources Accountability
86 and the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education
87 Accountability on the number of award recipients and all other
88 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.

