

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 17, 2019

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 28, 2019

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2019–20 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1759

Introduced by Assembly Member Salas
(~~Coauthor: Assembly Member Bigelow~~)
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bigelow and Gonzalez)

February 22, 2019

An act relating to health care, and making an appropriation therefor.
care.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1759, as amended, Salas. Health care workers: rural and underserved areas.

Existing law requires the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development to act as the coordinating agency to develop a strategic plan that would assist rural California to prepare for health care reform.

Existing law, the Health Education and Academic Loan Act, also authorizes the California Healthcare Workforce Policy Commission to provide assistance for the repayment of a student loan for medical education received by a medical student in an institution of higher education in California and requires the director to make loan assumption payments in connection with this program. Existing law requires the commission to give priority for loan assumption assistance to applicants who agree to provide primary care medical services for a minimum of 3 years in a medically underserved designated shortage area.

This bill would appropriate the sum of \$50,000,000 from the General Fund to the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development for the purpose of increasing the health care workforce in rural and underserved areas. The bill would require the office to allocate those funds for the support of programs that effect that purpose, *require the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, upon an express appropriation for the purpose of increasing the health care workforce in rural and underserved areas, to allocate the appropriated funds to support programs that effect that purpose*, including programs to recruit and train students from areas with a large disparity in patient-to-doctor ratios to practice in community health centers in the area from which each student was recruited and to expand and strengthen programs to recruit and prepare students from underrepresented and low-income backgrounds for health careers. The bill would also include a statement of legislative findings and declarations.

Vote: $\frac{2}{3}$ -majority. Appropriation: *yes-no*. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares as follows:
- 2 (1) The health and well-being of Californians is compromised
- 3 by both a significant health care workforce shortage and a growing
- 4 mismatch between population needs and available services.
- 5 (2) These shortages are most severe in some of California’s
- 6 largest and fastest growing regions, particularly in underserved,
- 7 rural, and ethnically and linguistically diverse communities.
- 8 (3) The state must make significant investments in our health
- 9 care workforce to overcome the growing gap between its existing
- 10 workforce and the state’s growing population and increasing
- 11 diversity to ensure access to quality, affordable health care.
- 12 (4) Californians who currently live in federally designated
- 13 Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) will be hit hardest
- 14 by the health care workforce shortage.
- 15 (5) Health care workforce challenges may result in individuals
- 16 going without needed care, including preventive services,
- 17 experiencing delays in receiving appropriate care, enduring
- 18 financial burdens, and undergoing preventable hospitalizations.

1 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this act to
2 increase the supply of health care professionals in rural and other
3 underserved communities.

4 ~~(b) (1) The sum of fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) is hereby~~
5 ~~appropriated from the General Fund to the Office of Statewide~~
6 ~~Health Planning and Development for the purpose of increasing~~
7 ~~the health care workforce in rural and underserved areas.~~

8 ~~(2) The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development~~
9 ~~shall allocate the funds appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1) for~~
10 ~~the support of programs that effect the purpose described in that~~
11 ~~paragraph including, but not limited to, the following programs:~~

12 *(b) Upon an express appropriation for the purpose of increasing*
13 *the health care workforce in rural and underserved areas, the*
14 *Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development shall*
15 *allocate those appropriated funds for the support of programs that*
16 *effect that purpose, including, but not limited to, the following*
17 *programs:*

18 ~~(A)~~

19 (1) A program to expand the number of primary care physician
20 and psychiatry residency positions, including universities, hospitals,
21 and clinics that have not previously operated residency programs,
22 and to prioritize the allocation of funds to residency programs in
23 HPSAs.

24 ~~(B)~~

25 (2) A program to recruit and train students from areas with a
26 large disparity in patient-to-doctor ratios to practice in community
27 health centers in the area from which each student was recruited.

28 ~~(C)~~

29 (3) A program to expand and strengthen loan repayment
30 programs for primary care physicians and clinicians that agree to
31 serve in HPSAs.

32 ~~(D)~~

33 (4) A program to expand and strengthen programs to recruit
34 and prepare students from underrepresented and low-income
35 backgrounds for health careers.

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