

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2295

To amend title VII of the Public Health Service Act to provide for a loan repayment program for the HIV clinical and dental workforce, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 1, 2021

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, and Mrs. HAYES) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend title VII of the Public Health Service Act to provide for a loan repayment program for the HIV clinical and dental workforce, and for other purposes.

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 “HIV Epidemic Loan-
5 Repayment Program Act of 2021” or the “HELP Act of
6 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR HIV CLINICAL**
2 **AND DENTAL WORKFORCE.**

3 Part C of title VII of the Public Health Service Act
4 (42 U.S.C. 293k et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
5 the following:

6 **“Subpart III—Loan Repayment Program for HIV**
7 **Clinical and Dental Workforce**

8 **“SEC. 749C. LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR HIV CLIN-**
9 **ICAL AND DENTAL WORKFORCE.**

10 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
11 the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services
12 Administration, shall carry out a program under which—

13 “(1) the Secretary enters into agreements with
14 physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, phy-
15 sician assistants, clinical pharmacists, and dentists
16 to make payments in accordance with subsection (b)
17 on the principal of and interest on any eligible loan;
18 and

19 “(2) the individuals each agree to the require-
20 ments of service in HIV treatment or HIV dental
21 care employment, as described in subsection (d).

22 “(b) PAYMENTS.—For each year of obligated service
23 by an individual pursuant to an agreement under sub-
24 section (a), the Secretary shall make a payment to such
25 individual as follows:

1 “(1) SERVICE IN A SHORTAGE AREA.—The Sec-
2 retary shall pay—

3 “(A) for each year of obligated service by
4 an individual pursuant to an agreement under
5 subsection (a), $\frac{1}{5}$ of the principal of and inter-
6 est on each eligible loan of the individual which
7 is outstanding on the date the individual began
8 service pursuant to the agreement; and

9 “(B) for completion of the fifth and final
10 year of such service, the remainder of such
11 principal and interest.

12 “(2) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The total amount of
13 payments under this section to any individual shall
14 not exceed \$250,000.

15 “(c) ELIGIBLE LOANS.—The loans eligible for repay-
16 ment under this section are each of the following:

17 “(1) Any loan for education or training for HIV
18 treatment employment.

19 “(2) Any loan under part E of title VIII (relat-
20 ing to nursing student loans).

21 “(3) Any Federal Direct Stafford Loan, Fed-
22 eral Direct PLUS Loan, Federal Direct Unsub-
23 sidized Stafford Loan, or Federal Direct Consolida-
24 tion Loan (as such terms are used in section 455 of
25 the Higher Education Act of 1965).

1 “(4) Any Federal Perkins Loan under part E
2 of title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

3 “(5) Any other Federal loan as determined ap-
4 propriate by the Secretary.

5 “(d) REQUIREMENTS OF SERVICE.—Any individual
6 receiving payments under the program under this section
7 as required by an agreement under subsection (a) shall
8 agree to an annual commitment to full-time employment,
9 with no more than 1 year passing between any 2 years
10 of HIV treatment employment in the United States in a
11 service area that is—

12 “(1) a health professional shortage area, as des-
13 ignated under section 332;

14 “(2) a clinical site awarded a grant or other as-
15 sistance under title XXVI for the provision of clin-
16 ical or dental services; or

17 “(3) an area that meets criteria specified pur-
18 suant to subsection (f).

19 “(e) WAIVERS FOR HALF-TIME SERVICE.—

20 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may issue
21 waivers to individuals who have entered into a con-
22 tract for obligated service under this section under
23 which the individuals are authorized to satisfy the
24 requirement of obligated service through providing
25 service that is half time.

1 “(2) APPLICABLE PROVISIONS.—The provisions
2 of subparts II and III of part D of title III respect-
3 ing waivers under section 331(i) and half-time serv-
4 ice pursuant to such waivers shall apply to waivers
5 and half-time service under this section to the same
6 extent and in the same manner as such provisions
7 apply with respect to the National Health Service
8 Corps Loan Repayment Program.

9 “(f) CRITERIA FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICE AREAS.—
10 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment
11 of this section, the Secretary, acting through the Adminis-
12 trator of the Health Resources and Services Administra-
13 tion, shall establish criteria for additional service areas for
14 purposes of the requirement under subsection (d).

15 “(g) INELIGIBILITY FOR DOUBLE BENEFITS.—No
16 borrower may, for the same service, receive a reduction
17 of loan obligations or a loan repayment under both—

18 “(1) this section; and

19 “(2) any federally supported loan forgiveness
20 program, including under section 338B, 338I, or
21 846 of this Act, or section 428J, 428L, 455(m), or
22 460 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

23 “(h) BREACH.—

24 “(1) LIQUIDATED DAMAGES FORMULA.—The
25 Secretary may establish a liquidated damages for-

1 mula to be used in the event of a breach of an
2 agreement entered into under subsection (a).

3 “(2) LIMITATION.—The failure by an individual
4 to complete the full period of service obligated pur-
5 suant to such an agreement, taken alone, shall not
6 constitute a breach of the agreement, so long as the
7 individual completed in good faith the years of serv-
8 ice for which payments were made to the individual
9 under this section.

10 “(i) ADDITIONAL CRITERIA.—The Secretary—

11 “(1) may establish such criteria and rules to
12 carry out this section as the Secretary determines
13 are needed and in addition to the criteria and rules
14 specified in this section; and

15 “(2) shall give notice to the committees speci-
16 fied in subsection (j) of any criteria and rules so es-
17 tablished.

18 “(j) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 5 years
19 after the date of the enactment of this section, and every
20 other year thereafter, the Secretary shall prepare and sub-
21 mit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the
22 House of Representatives and the Committee on Health,
23 Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report
24 on—

1 “(1) the number, provider type, and location of
2 borrowers who have qualified for loan repayments
3 under this section; and

4 “(2) the impact of this section on the avail-
5 ability of HIV clinical care and treatment or HIV
6 dental care nationally, in shortage areas, and in
7 States, counties, and other jurisdictions targeted by
8 the Federal End the HIV Epidemic Initiative.

9 “(k) DEFINITION.—In this section:

10 “(1) The term ‘HIV’ means the human im-
11 munodeficiency virus.

12 “(2) The term ‘HIV treatment employment’
13 means employment (including a fellowship)—

14 “(A) as a physician, physician assistant,
15 advanced practice registered nurse, clinical
16 pharmacist, dentist, or other relevant practi-
17 tioner licensed or certified in accordance with
18 applicable State and Federal law, where the pri-
19 mary intent and function of the position is the
20 direct treatment and care of persons living with
21 HIV; and

22 “(B) which is located at an HIV treatment
23 program, which could be affiliated with a pri-
24 vate practice, community health center, tele-
25 health platform, migrant health center, aca-

1 demic medical center, hospital, rural health pro-
2 gram, health program or facility operated by an
3 Indian tribe or tribal organization, Federal
4 medical facility, or any other facility as deter-
5 mined appropriate for purposes of this section
6 by the Secretary.

7 “(3) The terms ‘Indian tribe’ and ‘tribal organi-
8 zation’ have the meanings given those terms in sec-
9 tion 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
10 cation Assistance Act.

11 “(4) The term ‘jurisdiction’ means a city, town,
12 county, or other public body created by or pursuant
13 to State law, or an Indian tribe.

14 “(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
15 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
16 \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2027.”.

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