

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. 485

BY TRANSPORTATION AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO THE STATE PERSONNEL SYSTEM; AMENDING CHAPTER 53, TITLE 67, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION 67-5339A, IDAHO CODE, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS REGARDING A STUDENT LOAN COMPENSATION PROGRAM FOR NURSES EMPLOYED AT IDAHO STATE VETERANS HOMES.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. That Chapter 53, Title 67, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a NEW SECTION, to be known and designated as Section 67-5339A, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

67-5339A. VETERANS HOME STUDENT LOAN COMPENSATION PROGRAM. (1) There is hereby created a student loan compensation program for nurses employed at Idaho state veterans homes. For purposes of this section:

(a) "Commission" means the Idaho veterans affairs commission;

(b) "Division" means the division of veterans services, established pursuant to section 65-201, Idaho Code;

(c) "Division administrator" means the administrator of the division of veterans services;

(d) "Nurse" means a person licensed pursuant to section 54-1408, Idaho Code; and

(e) "Program" means the student loan compensation program established pursuant to this section.

(2) Loan compensation made pursuant to this section shall be:

(a) Subject to appropriation; and

(b) Limited to the repayment of outstanding student loans accrued prior to current employment.

(3) With the advice of the commission, the division administrator shall oversee the program and, in such capacity, shall:

(a) Have the authority to offer loan repayment disbursements under the program; and

(b) Annually determine whether continuation of the program for each participating nurse shall occur based on the number of participating nurses and the availability of funds.

(4) Nurses eligible for loan repayment under this section shall enter into an agreement with the division each year a loan repayment disbursement is offered. The agreement shall include but shall not be limited to the following:

(a) Disclosure of the nurse's current student loan balance;

(b) Affirmation by the veterans home that the nurse provided no less than two thousand eighty (2,080) credited state service hours prior to the first disbursement and that the nurse obtained satisfactory performance standards during that time;

- 1 (c) Affirmation that any subsequent disbursement shall occur one (1)
- 2 year or two thousand eighty (2,080) credited state service hours after
- 3 the previous disbursement and that the nurse shall obtain satisfactory
- 4 performance standards during that time; and
- 5 (d) Confirmation that any prior disbursements made under the program
- 6 were used to pay outstanding student loans.
- 7 (5) Loan repayment disbursement made pursuant to this section shall be
- 8 limited to a period of five (5) years. A single yearly reimbursement made
- 9 to or on behalf of an eligible nurse shall not exceed five thousand dollars
- 10 (\$5,000) each year of eligibility.