

1 AN ACT relating to the creation of the Commonwealth West Healthcare Workforce  
2 Innovation Center, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring an emergency.

3 ***Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

4 ➔Section 1. The Commonwealth West Healthcare Workforce Innovation Center  
5 shall be established to provide accessible, healthcare-specific educational pathways in the  
6 western region of the state for postsecondary, high school, and nontraditional students to  
7 address decreased student enrollment in healthcare-related fields, resulting in expanding  
8 the pipeline of qualified healthcare workers and reducing the shortage of qualified  
9 medical staff across the Commonwealth.

10 ➔Section 2. The center shall be a health education, innovation, and simulation  
11 facility located in Owensboro that offers a combination of instruction and hands-on  
12 experiential learning opportunities to students pursuing nursing and allied health  
13 credentials. The center shall be operated and maintained through a collaborative  
14 partnership between public and private organizations, including but not limited to Brescia  
15 University, Elizabethtown Community and Technical College, Henderson Community  
16 and Technical College, Hopkinsville Community and Technical College, Kentucky  
17 Wesleyan College, Madisonville Community and Technical College, Owensboro  
18 Community and Technical College, Western Kentucky University, Western Kentucky  
19 University-Owensboro, University of Louisville School of Nursing-Owensboro, and  
20 Owensboro Health, Inc.

21 ➔Section 3. The center shall provide in-person and virtual didactic instruction  
22 and hands-on, experiential learning opportunities while offering career paths to address  
23 immediate workforce needs, including but not limited to nursing, nursing assistant,  
24 medical office assistant, radiology science, long-term care, social work, clinical  
25 psychology, behavioral health, laboratory services, paramedic, and community healthcare  
26 workers.

27 ➔Section 4. The General Assembly shall provide funds for the initial start-up and

1 operating costs of the center, including but not limited to faculty, personnel, facility,  
2 equipment, and furnishings in the form of a grant to be administered by the Kentucky  
3 Community and Technical College System and distributed to the collaborating partners  
4 and organizations in accordance with the agreements established for the center.

5 ➔Section 5. By January 1, 2023, and by November 1, 2024, the Kentucky  
6 Community and Technical College System shall provide a report to the Legislative  
7 Research Commission on the status of the center, including but not limited to operations,  
8 enrollment, expenditures, funding, and partnerships.

9 ➔Section 6. There is hereby appropriated to the Kentucky Community and  
10 Technical College System General Fund moneys in the amount of \$24,258,300 in fiscal  
11 year 2022-2023 and \$13,741,700 in fiscal year 2023-2024 for the purpose of establishing  
12 and operating the Commonwealth West Healthcare Workforce Innovation Center as  
13 described in this Act. Notwithstanding KRS 45.229, the General Fund appropriation in  
14 fiscal year 2022-2023 and fiscal year 2023-2024 shall not lapse and shall carry forward in  
15 the Kentucky Community and Technical College System for the purposes specified in this  
16 section.

17 ➔Section 7. Whereas the healthcare workforce shortage is a significant challenge  
18 for the Commonwealth and the provisions of this Act will help address the problem, an  
19 emergency is declared to exist and this Act takes effect upon its passage and approval by  
20 the Governor or upon its otherwise becoming a law.