2024 -- S 2867 SUBSTITUTE A AS AMENDED

LC005661/SUB A ======

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

AN ACT

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- THE LADDERS TO LICENSURE PROGRAM

Introduced By: Senators Cano, DiMario, Pearson, Mack, McKenney, Zurier, and Lawson

Date Introduced: March 22, 2024

Referred To: Senate Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1	SECTION 1. Title 42 of the General Laws entitled "STATE AFFAIRS AND
2	GOVERNMENT" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:
3	CHAPTER 166
4	THE LADDERS TO LICENSURE PROGRAM
5	42-166-1. The ladders to licensure grant program.
6	The executive office of health and human services is hereby directed to establish the ladders
7	to licensure grant program, a public-private partnership to:
8	(1) Increase the number of licensed health professionals;
9	(2) Increase racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of health professionals;
10	(3) Provide academic, financial and wrap around supports to enable working adults to
11	obtain health professional higher education degrees and license;
12	(4) Leverage employer support for academic, financial and wraparound supports;
13	(5) Align with existing state workforce and higher education initiatives;
14	(6) Develop and implement career ladders with tiered training and education requirements
15	and corresponding salary increases;
16	(7) Develop and implement interscholastic and interdepartmental agreements that accept
17	prior learning, credentials, work experience, and academic credits towards requirement for higher
18	education health professional degrees;

- 1 (8) Establish policies and initiatives to counter systemic racism and other institutional
- 2 <u>barriers to participation and advancement of underrepresented populations;</u>
- 3 (9) Establish policies and initiatives that provide flexible scheduling of work hours and/or
- 4 academic programs to reduce barriers to participation; and
- 5 (10) Identify state policy barriers to entry and advancement in the field.
- 6 <u>42-166-2. Use of appropriated funds.</u>
- 7 Any appropriated funds shall be used to provide grants to three (3) or four (4) grantee
- 8 partnerships, consisting of multiple private sector health and human services employer
- 9 organizations and education grantee partnerships (with at least one focused on behavioral health
- 10 and one focused on nursing). Employers will be required to contribute a twenty-five percent (25%)
- 11 <u>in-kind match and a ten percent (10%) cash match.</u>

12 **42-166-3. Oversight.**

- 13 The executive office of health and human services shall collaborate and coordinate with
- 14 the department of labor and training and the office of the postsecondary commissioner in the
- 15 <u>development, implementation and oversight of the program.</u>

16 **42-166-4. Reporting.**

- 17 The executive office of health and human services shall provide quarterly reports to the
- 18 speaker of the house of representatives and senate president documenting the progress of the
- 19 implementation of the program.
- 20 SECTION 2. This act would take effect on July 1, 2024.

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EXPLANATION

BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF

AN ACT

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- THE LADDERS TO LICENSURE PROGRAM

1	This act would direct the executive office of health and human services (EOHHS), in
2	conjunction with the department of labor and training (DLT) and the office of the postsecondary
3	commissioner, to implement a grant program to fund public or private partnerships that provide
4	opportunities for healthcare paraprofessionals to pursue higher education degrees and health
5	professional licensure. This program would increase the diversity of the health professional
6	workforce.
7	This act would take effect on July 1, 2024.

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