

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 9849

To amend the Public Health Service Act to address the shortage of medical laboratory personnel, and for other purposes.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 25, 2024

Ms. ROSS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

---

## A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to address the shortage of medical laboratory personnel, 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 “Medical Laboratory  
5 Personnel Shortage Relief Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. INCLUDING MEDICAL LABORATORY PERSONNEL**  
7 **AND SERVICES IN NATIONAL HEALTH SERV-**  
8 **ICE CORPS PROGRAMS.**

9 (a) DEFINITION.—Section 331(a) of the Public  
10 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d(a)) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (3)(D), by striking “or mental  
2 health” and inserting “mental health, or medical  
3 laboratory services”; and

4 (2) by adding at the end the following:

5 “(F) The term ‘medical laboratory personnel’—

6 “(i) means individuals—

7 “(I) seeking or receiving training in  
8 an accredited medical laboratory science  
9 program; or

10 “(II) employed in a position in which  
11 the individual examines materials derived  
12 from the human body for the purpose of  
13 providing information for the diagnosis,  
14 prevention, or treatment of a disease or  
15 impairment of human beings; and

16 “(ii) includes phlebotomists, medical lab-  
17 oratory assistants, histotechnologists, laboratory  
18 scientists, laboratory technicians, and genetic  
19 counselors.”.

20 (b) MEDICAL LABORATORY HEALTH PROFESSIONAL  
21 TARGET AREAS.—Section 332 of the Public Health Serv-  
22 ice Act (42 U.S.C. 254e) is amended by adding at the  
23 end the following:

24 “(1) MEDICAL LABORATORY HEALTH PROFESSIONAL  
25 TARGET AREAS.—

1           “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry  
2 out a program of—

3           “(A) identifying medical laboratory health  
4 professional target areas; and

5           “(B) assigning members of the Corps who  
6 are medical laboratory personnel to such areas.

7           “(2) APPLICABLE PROVISIONS.—The provisions  
8 of paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), and (6) of sub-  
9 section (k) shall apply to the identification of med-  
10 ical laboratory health professional target areas and  
11 the assignment of medical laboratory personnel  
12 under this subsection except that—

13           “(A) references to maternity care health  
14 professional target areas shall be treated as ref-  
15 erences to medical laboratory health profes-  
16 sional target areas; and

17           “(B) references to maternity care health  
18 professionals and maternity care shall be treat-  
19 ed as references to medical laboratory personnel  
20 and medical laboratory services, respectively.”.

21           (c) LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.—Section 338B of  
22 the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l–1) is  
23 amended—

24           (1) in subsection (a)(1), by inserting “medical  
25 laboratory personnel,” after “dentists,”; and

1 (2) in subsection (b)—

2 (A) by striking “an individual must—”  
3 and all that follows through “or physician as-  
4 sistant;” and inserting the following: “an indi-  
5 vidual must—

6 “(1)(A)(i) have a degree in medicine, osteo-  
7 pathic medicine, dentistry, or another health profes-  
8 sion, or an appropriate degree from a graduate pro-  
9 gram of behavioral and mental health;

10 “(ii) be certified as a nurse midwife, nurse  
11 practitioner, or physician assistant; or

12 “(iii) have a degree in medical laboratory  
13 science;”;

14 (B) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting  
15 “medical laboratory science,” after “mental  
16 health,”; and

17 (C) in paragraph (1)(C)(ii), by inserting  
18 “medical laboratory science,” after “dentistry,”.

19 **SEC. 3. MEDICAL LABORATORY PERSONNEL EDUCATION**  
20 **PROGRAM.**

21 The Public Health Service Act is amended by insert-  
22 ing after section 778 (42 U.S.C. 295f-3) the following:

1 **“SEC. 779. MEDICAL LABORATORY PERSONNEL EDUCATION**  
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants  
4 to, or enter into contracts with, eligible entities that the  
5 Secretary has determined are capable of carrying out such  
6 grant or contract—

7 “(1) to plan, develop, operate, or participate in  
8 an accredited medical laboratory professional edu-  
9 cation program that awards an associate’s, bach-  
10 elor’s, or graduate degree or certificate; and

11 “(2) to recruit, train, and develop faculty for  
12 such program.

13 “(b) PRIORITIES IN MAKING AWARDS.—In awarding  
14 grants and contracts under paragraph (1), the Secretary  
15 shall give priority to eligible entities that—

16 “(1) utilize innovative approaches to clinical  
17 teaching;

18 “(2) are committed to training individuals from  
19 rural, underrepresented, or disadvantaged back-  
20 grounds;

21 “(3) teach collaboration among health profes-  
22 sionals; or

23 “(4) provide training in cultural competency  
24 and health literacy.

1       “(c) DURATION OF AWARDS.—A grant or contract  
2 awarded under this subsection shall be for a period of 3  
3 years.

4       “(d) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—In this section,  
5 the term ‘eligible entity’ means an accredited nonprofit  
6 hospital, school of allied health, or nonprofit entity that  
7 sponsors accredited internship programs required for pro-  
8 fessional certification.

9       “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
10 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

11               “(1) \$25,000,000 for the first full fiscal year  
12 beginning after the date of enactment of this Act;  
13 and

14               “(2) such sums as may be necessary for subse-  
15 quent fiscal years.”.

○