

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 2815

To provide for a wage differential program to support new nursing school faculty members.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To provide for a wage differential program to support new nursing school faculty members.

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 “Nurse Faculty Short-  
5 age Reduction Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. NURSE FACULTY GRANT PROGRAM.**

7 Section 846A of the Public Health Service Act (42  
8 U.S.C. 296n–1) is amended—

1 (1) in the section heading, by adding “**AND**  
 2 **NURSING FACULTY GRANT PROGRAM**” after  
 3 **“LOAN PROGRAM”**;

4 (2) by amending subsection (a) to read as fol-  
 5 lows:

6 “(a) **IN GENERAL.**—To increase the number of quali-  
 7 fied nursing faculty, the Secretary, acting through the Ad-  
 8 ministrator of the Health Resources and Services Admin-  
 9 istration, may—

10 “(1) enter into an agreement with any accred-  
 11 ited school of nursing for the establishment and op-  
 12 eration of a student loan fund in accordance with  
 13 subsection (b); and

14 “(2) award nurse faculty grants in accordance  
 15 with subsection (c).”;

16 (3) in subsection (b)—

17 (A) by redesignating clauses (A) through  
 18 (D) of paragraph (2) as clauses (i) through  
 19 (iv), respectively, and adjusting the margins ac-  
 20 cordingly;

21 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (1)  
 22 through (5) as subparagraphs (A) through (E),  
 23 respectively, and adjusting the margins accord-  
 24 ingly;

1 (C) in subparagraph (C), by striking “sub-  
2 section (c)” and inserting “paragraph (2)”; and

3 (D) by striking “(b) AGREEMENTS—Each  
4 agreement entered into under subsection (a)  
5 shall—” and inserting the following:

6 “(b) SCHOOL OF NURSING STUDENT LOAN FUND.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each agreement entered  
8 into under subsection (a)(1) shall—”;

9 (4) in subsection (c)—

10 (A) by striking “subsection (a)” each place  
11 it appears and inserting “subsection (a)(1)”;

12 (B) in paragraph (3), by redesignating  
13 subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and  
14 (ii), respectively, and adjusting the margins ac-  
15 cordingly;

16 (C) in paragraph (6), by redesignating  
17 subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and  
18 (ii), respectively, and adjusting the margins ac-  
19 cordingly; and

20 (D) by redesignating paragraphs (1)  
21 through (6) as subparagraphs (A) through (F),  
22 respectively, and adjusting the margins accord-  
23 ingly; and

1 (E) in subparagraph (F)(ii), as so redesignig-  
2 nated, by striking “subsection (e)” and insert-  
3 ing “paragraph (4)”;

4 (5) in subsection (e), by striking “subsection  
5 (e)(6)(B)” and inserting “paragraph (2)(F)(ii)”;

6 (6) by redesignating subsections (c) through (e)  
7 as paragraphs (2) through (4), respectively, and ad-  
8 justing the margins accordingly; and

9 (7) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(c) NURSE FACULTY GRANT PROGRAM.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-  
12 lish and carry out a program described in subsection  
13 (a)(2) under which eligible schools of nursing receive  
14 a grant for purposes of supplementing the salaries  
15 to enhance recruitment and retention of nursing fac-  
16 ulty members.

17 “(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to re-  
18 ceive a grant under this subsection, an entity shall—

19 “(A) be a school of nursing; and

20 “(B) submit an application to the Sec-  
21 retary, at such time, in such manner, and con-  
22 taining such information as the Secretary may  
23 require, including—

24 “(i)(I) to the extent such information  
25 is available to the school of nursing, the

1 salary history of nursing faculty at such  
2 school who previously were nurses in clinical  
3 practice, for the most recent 3-year period  
4 ending on the date of application, adjusted  
5 for inflation as appropriate and broken  
6 down by credentials, experience, and  
7 levels of education of such nurses; or

8 “(II) if the information described in  
9 subclause (I) is not available, information  
10 on the average local salary of nurses in  
11 clinical practice, adjusted for inflation as  
12 appropriate and broken down by credentials,  
13 experience, and levels of education of  
14 the individual nurses, in accordance with  
15 such requirements as the Secretary may  
16 specify;

17 “(ii) an attestation of the average  
18 nursing faculty salary at the school of  
19 nursing during the most recent 3-year period  
20 prior to the date of application, adjusted  
21 for inflation, as appropriate, broken  
22 down by credentials, experience, and levels  
23 of education of such faculty members;

24 “(iii) the number of nursing faculty  
25 member vacancies at the entity at the time

1 of application, and the entity's projection  
2 of such vacancies over the ensuing 5-year  
3 period; and

4 “(iv) a description of the entity's  
5 plans to identify funding sources to  
6 sustainably continue, after the 3-year  
7 grant period, the salary available to the eli-  
8 gible nursing faculty member pursuant to  
9 the program under this subsection during  
10 such grant program and to retain eligible  
11 nursing faculty members after the end of  
12 the grant period.

13 “(3) AWARDS.—A grant awarded under this  
14 subsection, with respect to supporting eligi-  
15 ble nursing faculty members, shall—

16 “(A) be awarded to the school of nursing  
17 to supplement the salaries of eligible faculty  
18 members at the school of nursing, annually, for  
19 up to a 3-year period, in an amount equal to,  
20 for each eligible nursing faculty member at the  
21 eligible entity during the grant period, the dif-  
22 ference between—

23 “(i) the average salary of nurses in  
24 clinical practice submitted under subclause  
25 (I) or (II) of paragraph (2)(B)(i); and

1 “(ii) the greater of—

2 “(I) the salary for the eligible  
3 nursing faculty member at the school  
4 of nursing; or

5 “(II) the average nursing faculty  
6 salary submitted under paragraph  
7 (2)(B)(ii) for faculty members with  
8 the same or similar credentials and  
9 level of education;

10 “(B) notwithstanding section 803(a), be  
11 used in its entirety to supplement the eligible  
12 faculty member’s salary; and

13 “(C) be conditioned upon the school of  
14 nursing maintaining, for each year in which the  
15 award is made as described in subparagraph  
16 (A), a salary for such faculty member at a level  
17 that is not less than the greater of the amount  
18 under subclause (I) or (II) of subparagraph  
19 (A)(ii).

20 “(4) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this  
21 subsection, the Secretary shall ensure the equitable  
22 geographic distribution of awards, and shall give pri-  
23 ority to applications from schools of nursing that  
24 demonstrate—

1           “(A) the greatest need for such grant,  
2           which may be based upon the financial cir-  
3           cumstances of the school of nursing, eligible  
4           nurse faculty members, the planned number of  
5           students to be trained or admitted off a wait  
6           list;

7           “(B) training or partnerships to serve vul-  
8           nerable patient populations, such as through  
9           the location or activity of a school in a health  
10          professional shortage area;

11          “(C) recruitment and retention of faculty  
12          from underrepresented populations; or

13          “(D) other particular need for such grant,  
14          including public institutions of higher education  
15          that offer 4-year degrees but at which the pre-  
16          dominant degree awarded is an associate de-  
17          gree.

18          “(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in  
19          this subsection precludes a school of nursing or an  
20          eligible nursing faculty member receiving an award  
21          under this section from obtaining or receiving any  
22          other form of Federal support or funding.

23          “(6) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the  
24          date of enactment of the Nurse Faculty Shortage  
25          Reduction Act of 2023, the Secretary shall submit to

1 the Committee on Finance and the Committee on  
2 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Sen-  
3 ate and the Committee on Ways and Means and the  
4 Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House  
5 of Representatives, a report that evaluates the pro-  
6 gram established under this subsection, including—

7 “(A) the impact of such program on re-  
8 cruitment and retention rates of nursing fac-  
9 ulty, as available, and specifically for each fac-  
10 ulty member participating in the program; and

11 “(B) recommendations and considerations  
12 for Congress on continuing the program under  
13 this section through the Medicare program  
14 under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

15 “(7) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

16 “(A) ELIGIBLE NURSING FACULTY MEM-  
17 BER.—The term ‘eligible nursing faculty mem-  
18 ber’ means a nursing faculty member who—

19 “(i) was hired by a school of nursing  
20 within the 2-year period preceding the sub-  
21 mission of an application under paragraph  
22 (2), or a prospective nursing faculty mem-  
23 ber;

1           “(ii) is currently employed at the  
2           school of nursing and who demonstrates  
3           the need for such support;

4           “(iii) previously worked as a nurse in  
5           clinical practice or as a nurse faculty mem-  
6           ber at another school of nursing; or

7           “(iv) may work on a part-time basis  
8           as a nursing faculty member, for whom  
9           such award amounts described in para-  
10          graph (3) shall be prorated relative to the  
11          amount of time participating in part-time  
12          teaching.

13          “(B) INFLATION.—The term ‘inflation’  
14          means the Consumer Price Index for all urban  
15          consumers (all items; U.S. city average).

16          “(8) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—  
17          To carry out this subsection, there is authorized to  
18          be appropriated \$28,500,000 for each of fiscal year  
19          2024 through 2028.”.

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