

1 S.123

2 Introduced by Senators Hooker, Hardy, Pollina, Ram and Terenzini

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Health; professions and occupations; physicians; primary care; loan
6 repayment

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish a
8 loan repayment assistance program for new primary care physicians that would
9 award grants equal to one-half of the recipient's outstanding medical school
10 debt, paid over five years, in exchange for a minimum 10-year service
11 obligation as a primary care physician in Vermont.

12 An act relating to loan repayment assistance for primary care physicians

13 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

14 Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. § 34 is added to read:

15 § 34. PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS; LOAN REPAYMENT

16 ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

17 (a) The Department of Health, in collaboration with the Office of Primary
18 Care and Area Health Education Centers Program at the University of Vermont
19 College of Medicine (AHEC), shall establish a loan repayment assistance
20 program for primary care physicians. The program shall be open to any

1 individual, regardless of residence, who graduated from an accredited medical
2 school within the previous two years, and to Vermont residents who graduated
3 from an accredited medical school within the previous five years and are
4 already practicing primary care in this State.

5 (b)(1) The program shall provide grants to eligible physicians in an amount
6 equal to one-half of the recipient's outstanding medical school debt, to be
7 allocated over a five-year period.

8 (2) In exchange for the grant award, the recipient shall incur an
9 obligation of 10 years of service as a primary care physician in Vermont.
10 Approved specialties shall be all of the specialties recognized by the National
11 Health Service Corps at the time of the scholarship award, which may include
12 family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics-gynecology, and
13 psychiatry.

14 (c) A recipient who does not fulfill the commitment to practice primary
15 care in accordance with the terms of the grant award shall forfeit the remainder
16 of the grant award, if any, and shall be liable for repayment of the full amount
17 of grant funds awarded to date, plus interest calculated in accordance with the
18 formula determined by the National Health Service Corps for failure to
19 complete a service obligation under that program.

20 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

21 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.