

**DRAFT ONLY  
NOT APPROVED FOR  
INTRODUCTION**

HOUSE BILL NO.

Health care provider loan repayment.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Wilson

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to public health and safety; amending the  
2 allied healthcare provider loan repayment program to  
3 provider loan repayment for healthcare providers responding  
4 to the COIVD-19 public health emergency as specified;  
5 providing for program applicant eligibility; authorizing  
6 rulemaking; providing an appropriation as specified; and  
7 providing for an effective date.

8

9 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

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11 **Section 1.** W.S. 9-2-119(a) by creating a new  
12 paragraph (vi) is amended to read:

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1           **9-2-119. Allied health care provider loan repayment**  
2 **program.**

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4           (a) The department is authorized to enter into  
5 agreements with health care providers licensed or certified  
6 to provide health care services in this state including,  
7 but not limited to, hospital, medical, surgical, dental,  
8 vision, nursing, radiology, mental health, speech language  
9 pathology and pharmaceutical services. The agreements  
10 shall:

11  
12                   (vi) Adhere to other requirements as prescribed  
13 by the legislature for the period prescribed by the  
14 legislature.

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16           **Section 2.**

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18           (a) Upon application and notwithstanding W.S. 9-1-  
19 119(a)(ii) and (iii), any health care provider present and  
20 working in the state of Wyoming for not less than six (6)  
21 months between March 13, 2020 and December 30, 2020 and  
22 whose work responsibilities during that six (6) months were  
23 substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the

1 COVID-19 public health emergency may be repaid up to one  
 2 hundred percent (100%) of the amount of outstanding  
 3 educational loans the provider has acquired as a direct  
 4 result of undergraduate or postgraduate educational  
 5 training directly related to providing medical services, in  
 6 exchange for practicing under the terms of this section;

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10 **STAFF COMMENT**

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12 The Committee may wish to clarify to which loan obligations  
 13 the assistance provided under this bill draft applies. The  
 14 section could be interpreted to apply only to the loan  
 15 payments that were due during the time the provider was  
 16 working in the State in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.  
 17 Alternatively, the section could be understood to authorize  
 18 the repayment of all outstanding educational loan  
 19 obligations, not just those payments due during the period  
 20 in which a provider was working in Wyoming in response to  
 21 COVID-19.

22

23 Additionally, the Committee may wish clarify whether the  
 24 requirement that the health care provider work in person in  
 25 the state for six (6) months be a consecutive period or if  
 26 smaller blocks of time adding up to six (6) months are  
 27 permissible. Relatedly, the term "substantially dedicated"  
 28 does not have a plain meaning and could lead to differing  
 29 interpretations. While this term is used, but not defined,  
 30 in the Department of Treasury guidance on the permissible  
 31 expenditure of CARES Act funds, the Committee may wish to  
 32 include a definition of this term.

33

34 Lastly, the language currently provides that the statutory  
 35 requirements relating to the amount awarded for loan  
 36 repayment and the time a person must provide services in  
 37 the state do not apply. The Committee may wish to consider  
 38 if additional, or different requirements specified under

1 W.S. 9-1-119 should be included. For example, W.S. 9-1-  
 2 119(a)(i) requires that the health care services be  
 3 provided in underserved areas and must include patients  
 4 qualified under the Medical Assistance and Services Act,  
 5 Title XVIII of the federal Social Security Act and the  
 6 child health insurance program. This may or may not be  
 7 necessary due to the unique nature of the health care  
 8 response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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12 (b) The educational loan assistance provided under  
 13 this section shall be for the purpose of increasing and  
 14 retaining the health care provider workforce necessary for  
 15 mitigating and responding to the COVID-19 public health  
 16 emergency. The Department shall administer the loan  
 17 assistance program authorized under this act consistent  
 18 with the purpose of the act.

19  
 20 (c) The department, in consultation with the  
 21 appropriate licensing board and professional association,  
 22 shall promulgate any rules necessary to disburse the funds  
 23 appropriated under this act in an equitable manner across  
 24 approved health care provider applicants, taking into  
 25 account the length of time the provider worked the state of  
 26 Wyoming before March 13, 2020, the amount of the provider's  
 27 outstanding loan and other relevant factors as determined  
 28 by the department;

1

2         **Section 3.** There is reappropriated to the department  
3 of health **XXX dollars (\$XXX,000,000.00)** from any federal  
4 funds appropriated in 2020 Wyoming Special Session Laws,  
5 Chapter 1, Section 2(b) and as authorized and made  
6 available for expenditure in Section 2(c)(ii). If a COVID-  
7 19 relief account or other similarly named account is  
8 created for the deposit of COVID-19 related emergency  
9 response funds, this appropriation shall be made from that  
10 account. The funds reappropriated under this section shall  
11 only be expended for the educational loan assistance  
12 authorized by this act and consistent with the terms of the  
13 federal gift, grant or appropriation from which the funds  
14 originate. This reappropriation shall not be transferred or  
15 expended for any other purpose.

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STAFF COMMENT

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20 The amount appropriated for the educational loan assistance  
21 is not specified in this bill draft and will warrant  
22 attention by the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services  
23 Interim Committee.

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25 The Committee may also wish to consider whether inserting a  
26 reversion of funds provision would be appropriate. This  
27 provision would allow for the federal funds reappropriated  
28 under this section to be recommitted to another purpose if  
29 after a prescribed period of time these funds have not been

1 expended as authorized under this draft bill. For example,  
2 language similar to section 2(c)(iii) of 2020 Special  
3 Session Senate Enrolled Act No. 1 could be included that  
4 reverts any remaining funds on September 15, 2020 to the  
5 Governor's Office for the purpose of Senate Enrolled Act  
6 No. 1.

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10 **Section 4.** This act is effective immediately upon  
11 completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law  
12 as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming  
13 Constitution.

14  
15 (END)