An Act To Increase Faculty in Nursing Education Programs by Amending the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program

Received by the Clerk of the House on January 11, 2021. Referred to the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 10 MRSA §1019, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 417, §1, is amended to read:

2. Criteria. For an applicant to participate in the nursing education loan repayment program established under subsection 1, the applicant must:
   A. Be a nurse;
   B. Complete Be currently enrolled in a master's or doctoral degree program in nursing or have completed a master's or doctoral degree in nursing;
   C. Possess an outstanding education loan relating to the master's or doctoral nursing degree; and
   D. Sign a statement of intent in a form acceptable to the authority to work as full-time nursing faculty in a nursing education program in the State for a minimum of 3 5 years after acceptance into the nursing education loan repayment program.

Sec. 2. 10 MRSA §1019, sub-§4, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 417, §1, is amended to read:

4. Administration. The nursing education loan repayment program and the nursing education loan repayment fund are administered by the authority. The authority shall repay the loan of an applicant who meets the criteria in subsection 2 in the amount of up to $4,500 $30,000 for a master's degree and up to $6,000 $60,000 for a doctoral degree. The authority may adopt rules to carry out the purposes of this subchapter. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are major substantive rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

SUMMARY

This bill amends the nursing education loan repayment program as follows.

1. It extends eligibility to apply to individuals who are currently enrolled in master's or doctoral degree programs.

2. It specifies that applicants must indicate an intention to work as full-time nursing faculty in a nursing education program in the State, and increases that required commitment from 3 years to 5 years after acceptance into the nursing education loan repayment program.

3. It increases the maximum amount of loans eligible for repayment under the program from $4,500 to $30,000 for a master's degree and from $6,000 to $60,000 for a doctoral degree.