

Introduced by

Senator Mathern

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 43-12.3-06 of the North Dakota Century Code,
2 relating to the student loan repayment program; to provide an appropriation to the department
3 of health and human services for the behavioral health loan repayment program; and to declare
4 an emergency.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

6 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-12.3-06 of the North Dakota Century Code is
7 amended and reenacted as follows:

8 **43-12.3-06. Student loan repayment program - Contract.**

- 9 1. The health council shall enter a contract with a selected health care professional. The
10 health council shall agree to provide student loan repayments on behalf of the
11 selected health care professional subject to the requirements and limitations of this
12 section.
- 13 a. For a physician:
- 14 (1) The loan repayment may not exceed twenty thousand dollars per year, and
15 may not exceed one hundred thousand dollars over five years; and
16 (2) The matching funds must equal fifty percent of the amount required in
17 paragraph 1.
- 18 b. For a clinical psychologist or a psychiatric registered nurse:
- 19 (1) The loan repayment may not exceed twelve thousand dollars per year, and
20 may not exceed sixty thousand dollars over five years; and
21 (2) The matching funds must equal twenty-five percent of the amount required
22 in paragraph 1.
- 23 c. For an advanced practice registered nurse or a physician assistant:

- 1 (1) The loan repayment may not exceed four thousand dollars per year, and
2 may not exceed twenty thousand dollars over five years; and
3 (2) The matching funds must equal ten percent of the amount required in
4 paragraph 1.
- 5 d. For a behavioral health professional:
6 (1) The loan repayment may not exceed four thousand dollars per year, and
7 may not exceed twenty thousand dollars over five years; and
8 (2) The matching funds must equal ten percent of the amount required in
9 paragraph 1.
- 10 e. For purposes of this section, a behavioral health professional means an
11 individual who practices in the behavioral health field and is:
12 (1) A licensed addiction counselor;
13 (2) A licensed professional counselor;
14 (3) A licensed social worker;
15 (4) A registered nurse;
16 (5) A specialty practice registered nurse; or
17 (6) A licensed behavior analyst.
- 18 2. a. Payments under this section must be made on behalf of the health care
19 professional directly to the Bank of North Dakota or to another participating
20 lending institution.
- 21 b. Except as otherwise provided, payments under this section may be made only at
22 the conclusion of each twelve month period of service.
- 23 c. Prorated payments may be made only if:
24 (1) The repayment of the loan requires less than a full annual payment;
25 (2) The health care professional is terminated or resigns from his or her
26 position; or
27 (3) The health care professional is unable to complete a twelve-month period of
28 service due to the individual's death, a certifiable medical condition or
29 disability, or a call to military service.
- 30 3. Payments under this section terminate upon the earlier of:
31 a. The full repayment of the health care professional's student loan; or

- 1 b. The completion of ~~five~~three years as a participant in the student loan repayment
- 2 program.
- 3 4. The health council shall waive the requirements of this section that pertain to matching
- 4 funds if the health care professional opens a new practice as a solo practitioner in a
- 5 city that has fewer than fifteen thousand residents.

6 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES -**
7 **COMMUNITY HEALTH TRUST FUND - BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LOAN REPAYMENT**

8 **PROGRAM.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury,
9 not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$377,600, or so much of the sum as may be necessary,
10 and out of any moneys in the community health trust fund in the state treasury, not otherwise
11 appropriated, the sum of \$510,400, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the
12 department of health and human services for the purpose of administering and providing loans
13 through the behavioral health loan repayment program pursuant to chapter 43-12.3, for the
14 period beginning with the effective date of this Act, and ending June 30, 2025. The department
15 shall collaborate with the North Dakota university system office regarding selection of
16 psychiatric registered nurse students applying for the program.

17 **SECTION 3. EMERGENCY.** This Act is declared to be an emergency measure.