

By: Senator(s) Parks, Michel, DeBar,  
Williams, Polk, Frazier, Butler (36th),  
Hopson

To: Universities and  
Colleges; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2419

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE HOSPITAL NURSES AND ALLIED HEALTH  
2 PROFESSIONAL RETENTION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM; TO PROVIDE AWARDS  
3 TO CERTAIN NURSES AND ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO APPLY  
4 SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS; TO SET ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS;  
5 TO EXCLUDE CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF PERSONS FROM ELIGIBILITY; TO  
6 REQUIRE THAT RECIPIENTS MAINTAIN CURRENT EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION AT  
7 ALL TIMES WITH THE STATE FINANCIAL AID BOARD; TO PROVIDE THAT  
8 AMOUNTS AWARDED BE PAID TO THE RECIPIENT'S LENDER OR LOAN SERVICE  
9 PROVIDER; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

11 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is established the "Hospital Nurses  
12 and Allied Health Professional Retention Loan Repayment Program"  
13 for new nursing and allied health profession graduates to be  
14 administered by the State Financial Aid Board.

15 (2) Subject to the availability of funds, an eligible  
16 applicant for an initial award must have:

17 (a) Legal residency in the State of Mississippi;

18 (b) Graduated from a degree-granting institution of  
19 higher learning that is accredited by the Southern Association of  
20 Colleges and Schools or a comparable accreditation body of another  
21 region;



22 (c) Gained recent employment for the first time as a  
23 licensed practical nurse \* \* \*, licensed registered nurse or  
24 allied health professional at a general acute care hospital in the  
25 State of Mississippi that is licensed by the Mississippi State  
26 Department of Health;

27 (d) A current Mississippi \* \* \* professional license;  
28 and

29 (e) Outstanding qualifying educational loans, received  
30 while pursuing a nursing or allied health profession degree, which  
31 may include the principal, interest, and related expenses such as  
32 the required interest premium on the unpaid balances of government  
33 and commercial loans obtained by the recipient for educational  
34 expense.

35 (3) Persons who have received funds from other forgivable  
36 loan programs at the same degree level established for nurses or  
37 allied health professionals under Mississippi law, or who are in  
38 default or delinquent on any federal, state, local or commercial  
39 qualifying educational loan, are not eligible for this program.

40 (4) Recipients in the initial year of the program will be  
41 selected on a first-come, first-served basis from all eligible  
42 applicants. In the second and subsequent years of an applicant's  
43 continued eligibility, priority shall be given to renewal  
44 applicants. In any given year no more than one hundred fifty  
45 (150) new registered nurse applicants \* \* \*, fifty (50) new  
46 licensed practical nurse applicants and twenty-five (25) new



47 allied health professional applicants may receive funds under the  
48 program.

49 (5) Awards for recipients who are employed at a licensed  
50 general acute care hospital in the state are as follows:

51 (a) Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) for the first  
52 year of employment;

53 (b) Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) for the second  
54 year of employment; and

55 (c) Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) for the third  
56 year of employment.

57 (6) A recipient shall not be penalized for ending employment  
58 at a licensed general acute care hospital in the State of  
59 Mississippi if the recipient begins working for another licensed  
60 general acute care hospital in the State of Mississippi during the  
61 year on which the award is based.

62 (7) Awards will be granted on a year-to-year basis, and  
63 recipients have no obligation to seek a subsequent award.

64 (8) Awards shall be paid annually, after the expiration of  
65 the year of employment for which the award was granted, to the  
66 recipient's lender or loan service provider, to be applied to the  
67 outstanding balance. Monies paid by the recipient or on the  
68 recipient's behalf toward qualifying educational loans before  
69 payment of the award are not eligible for reimbursement through  
70 the program.



71 (9) During the employment year for which the award is  
72 granted, a recipient must at all times keep the State Financial  
73 Aid Board informed of any changes to the recipient's current,  
74 correct, and complete employment information and status.

75 (10) Recipients who fail to maintain a \* \* \* Mississippi  
76 professional license or fail to fulfill the year of employment on  
77 which the award was based forfeit any right to the award.

78 (11) The State Financial Aid Board, in collaboration with  
79 the \* \* \* licensing board of the nurse or other health care  
80 professional eligible to receive funds under this program, must  
81 track award recipients under this program through their fifth  
82 employment year, unless the recipient leaves employment \* \* \* at a  
83 licensed general acute care hospital in the state at an earlier  
84 date. Data collected must include each recipients' place of  
85 employment and any other pertinent information necessary to  
86 determine the efficacy of the program in retaining nurses and  
87 allied health professionals in licensed general acute care  
88 hospitals in the state of Mississippi. The board must submit a  
89 report of the information collected under this subsection (11) to  
90 the Joint Legislative Budget Committee by October 1 of each year,  
91 and include information concerning the number of submitted  
92 applications and the amount of grant funds awarded to each  
93 applicant.

94 (12) The State Financial Aid Board must promulgate  
95 regulations necessary for the proper administration of this



96 section, including setting a fiscal year policy for the program  
97 and application dates and deadlines.

98 (13) There is established in the State Treasury a special  
99 fund to be designated the "Hospital Nursing and Allied Health  
100 Professional Loan Repayment Program," into which shall be  
101 deposited those funds appropriated by the Legislature, and any  
102 other funds that may be made available, for the purpose of  
103 implementing the loan repayment program established herein. Money  
104 in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall not lapse into the  
105 General Fund, and interest earned on any amounts deposited into  
106 the fund shall be credited to the special fund.

107 (14) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2026.

108 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-106-59, Mississippi Code of 1972,  
109 which establishes a forgivable loan program for baccalaureate and  
110 graduate studies in nursing, is repealed from and after July 1,  
111 2022.

112 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
113 and after its passage.

