

By: Senator(s) Parks, Jackson

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
SENATE BILL NO. 2373

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE SKILLED NURSING HOME AND HOSPITAL NURSES
2 RETENTION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR NEW NURSING GRADUATES TO BE
3 ADMINISTERED BY THE MISSISSIPPI POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FINANCIAL
4 ASSISTANCE BOARD; TO PROVIDE FOR THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS; TO
5 SET A MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF LOAN REPAYMENT; TO ESTABLISH THE
6 PROCEDURES FOR THE LOAN PROCESS; TO REQUIRE THE MISSISSIPPI
7 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BOARD TO PROMULGATE
8 REGULATIONS NECESSARY FOR THE PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF THE ACT,
9 INCLUDING SETTING A FISCAL YEAR POLICY FOR THE PROGRAM AND
10 APPLICATION DATES AND DEADLINES; TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL FUND IN
11 THE STATE TREASURY TO BE DESIGNATED THE SKILLED NURSING HOME AND
12 HOSPITAL NURSES LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FUND; TO REPEAL SECTIONS
13 37-106-59 AND 37-106-60, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH
14 ESTABLISHES A FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM FOR BACCALAUREATE AND
15 GRADUATE STUDIES IN NURSING; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

17 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is established the "Skilled Nursing
18 Home and Hospital Nurses Retention Loan Repayment Program" for new
19 nursing graduates to be administered by the Mississippi
20 Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board.

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

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



24 (b) Gained employment within the last year for the
25 first time as a full-time licensed practical nurse or licensed
26 registered nurse at a skilled nursing home in the State of
27 Mississippi or a general acute care hospital in the State of
28 Mississippi that is licensed by the Mississippi State Department
29 of Health;

30 (c) A current relevant Mississippi professional
31 license; and

32 (d) Outstanding qualifying educational loans, received
33 at any point during the recipients postsecondary education career,
34 which may include the principal, interest and related expenses
35 such as the required interest premium on the unpaid balances of
36 government and commercial loans obtained by the recipient for
37 educational expense.

38 (3) Persons who have received funds from state-forgivable
39 loan programs established under Mississippi law, or who are in
40 default or delinquent on any federal, state, local or commercial
41 qualifying educational loan, shall not be eligible for this
42 program.

43 (4) Recipients in the program shall be selected on a
44 first-come, first-served basis from all eligible applicants. The
45 Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board
46 shall renew eligible applicants approved in prior years only if
47 the renewal applicant continues to meet the standards set forth in



48 this act, and the renewal applicant has not received full funding
49 provided by this subsection (4).

50 (5) Awards for recipients who are employed at a skilled
51 nursing home or a licensed general acute care hospital in the
52 state may be a maximum of Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000.00) for
53 each year of employment up to three (3) years.

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

60 (7) Awards shall be granted on a year-to-year basis, and
61 recipients have no obligation to seek a subsequent award.

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

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



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

76 (11) The Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
77 Assistance Board, in collaboration with the State Board of Nursing
78 and any other applicable state agency as determined by the
79 Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board,
80 shall attempt to track award recipients under this program through
81 their third employment year, unless the recipient leaves
82 employment at a skilled nursing home or a licensed general acute
83 care hospital in the state at an earlier date. Data collected
84 shall include each recipients' place of employment and any other
85 pertinent information necessary to determine the efficacy of the
86 program in retaining nurses in skilled nursing homes or licensed
87 general acute care hospitals in the State of Mississippi.

88 (12) The Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
89 Assistance Board shall promulgate regulations necessary for the
90 proper administration of this section, including setting a fiscal
91 year policy for the program and application dates and deadlines.

92 (13) There is established in the State Treasury a special
93 fund to be designated the "Skilled Nursing Home and Hospital
94 Nurses Retention Loan Repayment Program Fund," into which shall be
95 deposited those funds appropriated by the Legislature, and any
96 other funds that may be made available, for the purpose of
97 implementing the loan repayment program established herein. Money



98 in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall not lapse into the
99 General Fund, and interest earned on any amounts deposited into
100 the fund shall be credited to the special fund.

101 (14) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2027.

102 **SECTION 2.** Sections 37-106-59 and 37-106-60, Mississippi
103 Code of 1972, which establishes a forgivable loan program for
104 baccalaureate and graduate studies in nursing, is repealed from
105 and after July 1, 2023.

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

