

By: Senator(s) Parks, Jackson

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2373
(As Passed the Senate)

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 AMEND SECTION 1, CHAPTER 47,
11 LAWS OF 2022, WHICH IS THE APPROPRIATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
12 OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING, TO REPLACE THE NURSING
13 AND RESPIRATORY THERAPIST INCENTIVE PROGRAM WITH THE SKILLED
14 NURSING HOME AND HOSPITAL NURSES RETENTION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM;
15 TO AMEND SECTION 2, CHAPTER 47, LAWS OF 2022, WHICH IS THE
16 APPROPRIATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF
17 HIGHER LEARNING, TO REPLACE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE
18 INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING WITH THE MISSISSIPPI POSTSECONDARY
19 EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BOARD FOR PURPOSES OF DISBURSING
20 FUNDS ALLOCATED FOR THE REPAYMENT PROGRAM; TO REPEAL SECTIONS
21 37-106-59 AND 37-106-60, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH ESTABLISH
22 A FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM FOR BACCALAUREATE AND GRADUATE STUDIES
23 IN NURSING; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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



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

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

32 (b) Gained employment within the last year for the
33 first time as a full-time licensed practical nurse or licensed
34 registered nurse at a skilled nursing home in the State of
35 Mississippi or a general acute care hospital in the State of
36 Mississippi that is licensed by the Mississippi State Department
37 of Health;

38 (c) A current relevant Mississippi professional
39 license; and

40 (d) Outstanding qualifying educational loans, received
41 at any point during the recipients postsecondary education career,
42 which may include the principal, interest and related expenses
43 such as the required interest premium on the unpaid balances of
44 government and commercial loans obtained by the recipient for
45 educational expense.

46 (3) Persons who have received funds from state-forgivable
47 loan programs established under Mississippi law, or who are in
48 default or delinquent on any federal, state, local or commercial
49 qualifying educational loan, shall not be eligible for this
50 program.

51 (4) Recipients in the program shall be selected on a
52 first-come, first-served basis from all eligible applicants. The
53 Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board



54 shall renew eligible applicants approved in prior years only if
55 the renewal applicant continues to meet the standards set forth in
56 this act, and the renewal applicant has not received full funding
57 provided by this subsection (4).

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

62 (6) A recipient shall not be penalized for ending employment
63 at a skilled nursing home or a licensed general acute care
64 hospital in the State of Mississippi if the recipient begins
65 working for another skilled nursing home or licensed general acute
66 care hospital in the State of Mississippi during the year on which
67 the award is based.

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

70 (8) Awards shall be paid annually, after the expiration of
71 the year of employment for which the award was granted, to the
72 recipient's lender or loan service provider, to be applied to the
73 outstanding balance. Monies paid by the recipient or on the
74 recipient's behalf toward qualifying educational loans before
75 payment of the award shall not be eligible for reimbursement
76 through the program.

77 (9) During the employment year for which the award is
78 granted, a recipient shall at all times keep the State Financial



79 Aid Board informed of any changes to the recipient's current,
80 correct and complete employment information and status.

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

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

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

100 (13) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2027.

101 **SECTION 2.** Section 1, Chapter 47, Laws of 2022,
102 appropriation to the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of
103 Higher Learning, is amended as follows:



104 Section 1. The following sum, or so much of it as may be
105 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the Coronavirus
106 State Fiscal Recovery Fund not otherwise appropriated, to
107 the * * * Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance
108 Board for the purpose of providing funding for the * * * Skilled
109 Nursing Home and Hospital Nurses Retention Loan Repayment Program,
110 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30,
111 2023.....\$ 6,000,000.00.

112 **SECTION 3.** Section 2, Chapter 47, Laws of 2022,
113 appropriation to the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of
114 Higher Learning, is amended as follows:

115 Section 2. (1) As used in this section and Section 3 of
116 this act, the term "agency" means the * * * Mississippi
117 Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board.

118 (2) The agency shall not disburse any funds appropriated
119 under this act to any recipient without first: (a) making an
120 individualized determination that the reimbursement sought is, in
121 the agency's independent judgment, for necessary expenditures
122 eligible under Section 602 of the federal Social Security Act as
123 added by Section 9901 of the federal American Rescue Plan Act of
124 2021 (ARPA) and its implementing guidelines, guidance, rules,
125 regulations and/or other criteria, as may be amended or
126 supplemented from time to time, by the United States Department of
127 the Treasury; and (b) determining that the recipient has not
128 received and will not receive reimbursement for the expense in



129 question from any source of funds, including insurance proceeds,
130 other than those funds provided under Section 602 of the federal
131 Social Security Act as added by Section 9901 of ARPA. In
132 addition, the agency shall ensure that all funds appropriated
133 under this act are disbursed in compliance with the Single Audit
134 Act (31 USC Sections 7501-7507) and the related provisions of the
135 Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR Section 200.303 regarding internal
136 controls, Sections 200.330 through 200.332 regarding sub-recipient
137 monitoring and management, and subpart F regarding audit
138 requirements.

139 (3) None of the funds appropriated under Section 1 of this
140 act shall be used to pay employee premium payments.

141 **SECTION 4.** Sections 37-106-59 and 37-106-60, Mississippi
142 Code of 1972, which establish a forgivable loan program for
143 baccalaureate and graduate studies in nursing, are repealed from
144 and after July 1, 2023.

145 **SECTION 5.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
146 and after its passage.

