

By Mrs. Gray of Framingham, petition of Barbara E. Gray for legislation to establish a health professions stipend/loan program within the Higher Education Coordinating Council. Education, Arts and Humanities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety-Four.

AN ACT TO CREATE A HEALTH PROFESSIONS STIPEND LOAN PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 15A of the General Laws, as most recently amended
2 by section 230 of Chapter 150 of the Acts of 1990, is hereby
3 amended by adding after the fourth paragraph the following new
4 paragraph: —

5 There shall be a health professions stipend/loan program
6 administered by the Massachusetts State Scholarship Office (the
7 Office) of the Board of Regents for the purpose of offering
8 assistance to qualified, needy students, residents of Massachu-
9 setts, in recognized degree-granting institutions who have entered
10 the academic major portion of an accredited degree program in
11 a health profession. Said assistance will be in the form of an annual
12 stipend to the student for eligible year(s) of the program to be
13 repaid by the student in service in an underserved area of the
14 Commonwealth approved by the Department of Public Health
15 of the Commonwealth on the basis of one year of service for each
16 year of stipend, provided that in the event that the student does
17 not follow the profession, or does not work in a designated facility,
18 or leaves the state, that portion of the stipend which has not been
19 repaid in service shall become a loan, provided further that said
20 loan shall be repayable at a rate of eight percent interest, to be
21 reviewed periodically by the Office, repayable over a maximum
22 of ten years to the Office and shall constitute a revolving fund
23 for said health professional's stipend-loan program. Said service
24 payback or loan repayment will start when the student has

25 completed the degree program and has fulfilled all other
26 internships, residencies and/or experience requirements for state
27 professional licensure. For the purpose of this program, eligible
28 academic programs shall be degree-granting and accredited by the
29 appropriate regional and national accrediting authority and shall
30 include, but not limited to, nursing, medicine, dentistry,
31 pharmacy, optometry, veterinary medicine, occupational therapy,
32 physical therapy, and such other accredited, degree-granting
33 programs as the Office may from time to time determine after
34 consultation with appropriate authorities. The Office shall
35 establish guidelines, subject to the approval of the Senate and
36 House Ways and Means Committees, governing the distribution
37 of the awards and allocations of funds in the program.