
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5909

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senate Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Frockt, Becker, Pedersen, Habib, and Keiser)

READ FIRST TIME 02/20/15.

1 AN ACT Relating to increasing the health care workforce and
2 increasing health care access across Washington state through
3 expansion of undergraduate medical and dental education, graduate
4 medical education, and health professional scholarship and loan
5 repayment programming; adding new sections to chapter 28B.20 RCW;
6 adding new sections to chapter 70.112 RCW; adding a new section to
7 chapter 28B.115 RCW; creating new sections; making appropriations;
8 and providing an expiration date.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** This act may be known and cited as the
11 omnibus health care access act of 2015.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The legislature finds that there is an
13 increasing shortage of practicing health care practitioners serving
14 patients in the state of Washington. In particular, Washington state
15 has a growing shortage of family medicine primary care physicians,
16 especially in rural and underserved areas. Workforce projections show
17 that Washington state needs eight hundred seventy-six more primary
18 care physicians in the state by as early as 2020 in order to meet the
19 needs of patients in Washington state.

1 (2) The legislature further finds that adequately addressing the
2 shortage of primary care health care practitioners, especially in
3 rural and underserved areas, requires a comprehensive health policy
4 approach that makes efficient use of public resources with an
5 emphasis on evidence-based practices.

6 (3) Accordingly, the legislature finds the University of
7 Washington school of medicine, serving as the medical school for a
8 five-state region of Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho
9 currently operates the number one ranked primary care, family
10 medicine, and rural medicine school in the nation at approximately
11 one-third less cost than the national average. Due in large part to
12 its community-based education model, the percentage of medical
13 student graduates of the University of Washington that stay in their
14 home state and practice primary care also exceeds national averages.
15 Therefore, greater student access to the University of Washington
16 school of medicine is a critical component to expanding Washington's
17 physician workforce.

18 (4) In addition, studies show that the greatest predictor of
19 where a physician will stay and practice is where they do their
20 residency, or post medical school training. Studies also show that,
21 by 2017, the number of students graduating from medical school will
22 exceed the number of residency slots available in the United States.
23 In order to ensure additional medical school graduates stay and
24 practice in rural and underserved communities in Washington state,
25 the legislature finds that it is critical to increase the number of
26 family medicine residency slots in underserved areas.

27 (5) The legislature also finds that the University of Washington,
28 school of dentistry's regional initiatives in dental education
29 program, operated in partnership with Eastern Washington University,
30 has been recognized as a model for addressing oral health workforce
31 needs in rural and underserved communities. The program's regional,
32 community-based approach has resulted in ninety percent of regional
33 initiatives in dental education graduates practicing in rural and
34 underserved areas in Washington state. Therefore, greater student
35 access to the University of Washington school of dentistry is a
36 critical component to expanding Washington's oral health workforce.

37 (6) Finally, the legislature finds that many underserved
38 communities face financial barriers, including those related to
39 providers' health education loan debt and disparate salaries and
40 struggle to attract and retain well-trained health professionals.

1 Health professional shortage areas also face additional health care
2 delivery challenges, including patient income or transportation
3 barriers and lower provider service reimbursements.

4 (7) The health professional loan repayment and scholarship
5 program fund assists underserved communities in recruiting and
6 retaining qualified health professionals. The incentive program also
7 encourages interested and academically prepared health care students
8 and professionals to consider practice in shortage areas. The
9 legislature finds that interested students who are encouraged to
10 explore the benefits and unique professional challenges presented in
11 rural health practice are more likely to establish community roots
12 and remain in the area in which they are trained. Providing
13 underserved communities additional resources to recruit qualified
14 health professionals reinforces the state's commitment to improve
15 access to comprehensive health care for all persons in Washington.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.20
17 RCW to read as follows:

18 The Washington state legislature must approve any partnership
19 agreements between the University of Washington and another entity,
20 related to the University of Washington's regional medical education
21 program with the states of Alaska, Montana, Idaho, or Wyoming.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.20
23 RCW to read as follows:

24 (1) Subject to available funding, the University of Washington is
25 directed to increase the number of medical students at its medical
26 school in Spokane from forty students per year to one hundred twenty
27 students per year as quickly as practicable, but no later than the
28 2021-22 academic year. All medical students accepted by the
29 University of Washington for this expansion must be Washington state
30 residents as defined by RCW 28B.15.012.

31 (2) Classroom and lab space must be provided on the Riverpoint
32 campus to the University of Washington to accommodate the class size
33 expansion outlined in subsection (1) of this section.

34 (3) Subject to available funding, the University of Washington is
35 directed to increase the number of dental students at its dental
36 program in Spokane from eight students per year to thirty students
37 per year as quickly as practicable, but no later than the 2019-20
38 academic year. All dental students accepted by the University of

1 Washington for this expansion must be Washington state residents as
2 defined by RCW 28B.15.012.

3 (4) Classroom and lab space must be provided on the Riverpoint
4 campus to the University of Washington to accommodate the class size
5 expansion outlined in subsection (3) of this section.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 70.112
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 Subject to available state funding, the medical education system
9 is directed to allocate funds to new or expanded residency programs.
10 The medical education system shall prioritize funding for the
11 following programs:

12 (1) New and expanded residency programs in rural and underserved
13 areas in the state;

14 (2) Conversion of existing osteopathic residency programs to new
15 accreditation standards;

16 (3) New and expanded residency programs that leverage additional
17 nonstate funding or maximize federal matching opportunities.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 70.112
19 RCW to read as follows:

20 (1) There is created a family practice education advisory board
21 which consists of nine members with the dean of the school of
22 medicine serving as chair. Other members of the board are:

23 (a) Chair, department of family medicine, school of medicine;

24 (b) Two public members to be appointed by the governor;

25 (c) A member appointed by the Washington state medical
26 association;

27 (d) A member appointed by the Washington state academy of family
28 physicians;

29 (e) A hospital administrator representing those Washington
30 hospitals with family practice residency programs, appointed by the
31 governor;

32 (f) A director representing the directors of community based
33 family practice residency programs, appointed by the governor; and

34 (g) A member that is an osteopathic physician and surgeon
35 licensed under chapter 18.57 RCW.

36 (2)(a) The dean and chair of the department of family medicine at
37 the University of Washington school of medicine are permanent members
38 of the advisory board.

1 (b) Other members must be initially appointed as follows: Terms
2 of the two public members are two years; the member from the medical
3 association and the hospital administrator, three years; and the
4 remaining two members, four years. Thereafter, terms for the
5 nonpermanent members are four years. Members may serve two
6 consecutive terms and new appointments must be filled in the same
7 manner as for original appointments. Vacancies must be filled for an
8 unexpired term in the manner of the original appointment.

9 (c) The position of chair must rotate each year. The chair is
10 selected by a majority vote of the board.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 70.112
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 The advisory board under section 6 of this act shall advise the
14 dean and the chair of the department of family medicine in the
15 implementation of the educational programs provided for in this
16 chapter including, but not limited to, the selection of the areas
17 within the state where affiliate residency programs should exist, the
18 allocation of funds appropriated under this chapter, and the
19 procedures for review and evaluation of the residency programs.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.115
21 RCW to read as follows:

22 (1) The sum of four million dollars, or as much thereof as may be
23 necessary, is appropriated from the general fund for the fiscal year
24 ending June 30, 2016, for the purposes of restoring funding to the
25 health professional loan repayment and scholarship program fund.

26 (2) The sum of four million dollars, or as much thereof as may be
27 necessary, is appropriated from the general fund for the fiscal year
28 ending June 30, 2017, for the purposes of restoring funding to the
29 health professional loan repayment and scholarship program fund.

30 (3) The amounts appropriated in this section must be deposited
31 into the health professional loan repayment and scholarship program
32 fund.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** (1) Beginning in August, 2015, the joint
34 legislative audit and review committee shall complete a financial
35 audit of the University of Washington school of medicine regional
36 medical education program with the states of Alaska, Montana, Idaho,
37 or Wyoming. The purpose of the audit is to identify the costs of

1 partnership agreements between the University of Washington and any
2 non-University of Washington entities. The audit must focus on public
3 funds; student fees; and auxiliary enterprises, including the
4 University of Washington medical education program in Spokane. The
5 audit must achieve the following:

6 (a) Identify how much money is being spent on or related to any
7 partnership agreements with non-University of Washington entities,
8 including agreements with Alaska, Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming; and

9 (b) Identify annual costs to the state for operation of the
10 program.

11 (2) The audit must include findings on the cost-effectiveness of
12 any program partnership agreements and detailed findings on the
13 program's finances.

14 (3) In conducting the audit, the auditor shall solicit input from
15 key higher education and medical education stakeholders, including
16 but not limited to students, faculty, staff, and practicing
17 physicians.

18 (4) The auditor shall report findings and recommendations to the
19 appropriate committees of the legislature by December 31, 2016.

20 (5) As used in this section, "program" means the University of
21 Washington school of medicine regional medical education program with
22 the states of Alaska, Montana, Idaho, or Wyoming.

23 (6) This section expires July 1, 2017.

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