



**AN ACT ADDRESSING THE SHORTAGE OF NURSES,
PHARMACISTS, ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, DENTAL
HYGIENISTS AND DENTAL ASSISTANTS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a
2 Connecticut nursing, pharmacy and allied health profession incentive
3 program administered by the Department of Higher Education.

4 (b) Within available appropriations, the program shall provide
5 grants to nursing, pharmacy and allied health students (1) in nursing,
6 pharmacy or allied health education programs at any institution of
7 higher education approved by the Board of Governors of Higher
8 Education, or (2) completing the requirements of such a nursing,
9 pharmacy or allied health education program as a graduate student,
10 provided such student received a grant pursuant to this section for one
11 year at the undergraduate level. No student shall receive a grant under
12 the program for more than two years. Maximum grants shall not
13 exceed five thousand dollars per year. The department shall ensure
14 that at least ten per cent of the grant recipients are minority students
15 who transfer from a Connecticut regional community-technical college.

16 (c) A student who received grants under subsection (b) of this
17 section, and who is employed as a nurse, pharmacist or allied health
18 professional in an acute care hospital in this state, a health care

19 institution in this state, as defined in subsection (a) of section 19a-490
20 of the general statutes, or a pharmacy in this state, as defined in section
21 20-571 of the general statutes, shall be eligible for reimbursement of
22 federal or state educational loans up to a maximum of two thousand
23 five hundred dollars per year for up to four years of such service.

24 (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this
25 section, the combined dollar value of grants and loan reimbursements
26 shall not exceed twenty thousand dollars per student.

27 (e) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003, the
28 Department of Higher Education may use up to two per cent of the
29 funds appropriated for purposes of this section for program
30 administration, promotion, recruitment and retention activities that are
31 designed to increase the number of students pursuing nursing,
32 pharmacy and allied health careers at Connecticut institutions of
33 higher education.

34 (f) Not later than January 1, 2004, the Commissioner of Higher
35 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the
36 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment
37 and operation of the incentive program authorized under this section
38 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
39 cognizance of matters relating to education and public health and to
40 the select committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
41 matters relating to workforce development.

42 (g) For purposes of this section, "allied health education program"
43 means a program that qualifies a student to work as an allied health
44 professional, and "allied health professional" means a professional or
45 paraprofessional who is qualified by special training, education, skills
46 and experience in providing health care, treatment and diagnostic
47 services under the supervision of or in collaboration with a licensed
48 practitioner, and includes, but is not limited to, licensed nurses,
49 certified nurse assistants, home health aides, physician assistants,
50 technologists, therapists and technicians.

51 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a
52 Connecticut dental hygienist and dental assistant incentive program
53 administered by the Department of Higher Education.

54 (b) Within available appropriations, the program shall provide
55 grants to students enrolled in dental hygienist or dental assistant
56 education programs at any institution of higher education approved
57 by the Board of Governors of Higher Education. No student shall
58 receive a grant under the program for more than two years. Maximum
59 grants shall not exceed five thousand dollars per year. The department
60 shall ensure that at least ten per cent of the grant recipients are
61 minority students.

62 (c) A student who received grants under subsection (b) of this
63 section, and who is employed as a dental hygienist or dental assistant
64 at a public health facility in this state, as defined in section 20-126l of
65 the general statutes, as amended, shall be eligible for reimbursement of
66 federal or state educational loans up to a maximum of two thousand
67 five hundred dollars per year for up to four years of such service.

68 (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this
69 section, the combined dollar value of grants and loan reimbursements
70 shall not exceed twenty thousand dollars per student.

71 (e) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003, the
72 Department of Higher Education may use up to two per cent of the
73 funds appropriated for purposes of this section for program
74 administration, promotion, recruitment and retention activities that are
75 designed to increase the number of students pursuing careers as dental
76 hygienists and dental assistants at Connecticut institutions of higher
77 education.

78 (f) Not later than January 1, 2004, the Commissioner of Higher
79 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the
80 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment
81 and operation of the incentive program authorized under this section
82 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having

83 cognizance of matters relating to education and public health and to
84 the select committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
85 matters relating to workforce development.

86 (g) For purposes of this section, "dental hygienist education
87 program" includes any program of study or courses taken to earn a
88 degree or license as a dental hygienist or to upgrade knowledge and
89 skills as a dental hygienist, and "dental assistant education program"
90 includes any program of study or courses taken to earn a certificate as
91 a dental assistant or to upgrade knowledge and skills as a dental
92 assistant.

93 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Within available
94 appropriations, the Board of Governors of Higher Education, in
95 consultation with the State Dental Commission established under
96 section 20-103a of the general statutes, the Office of Workforce
97 Competitiveness, the Commissioner of Public Health, the Labor
98 Commissioner and the superintendent of the regional vocational-
99 technical school system, shall:

100 (1) Review, evaluate and recommend improvements for degree and
101 certification programs for the education and training of dental
102 hygienists and dental assistants in order to increase the number of
103 students who enter and successfully complete such programs;

104 (2) Develop an initiative to expand dental hygienist and dental
105 assistant academic programs to promote increased enrollment and
106 retention in such programs in higher education;

107 (3) Recruit students for dental hygienist and dental assistant
108 academic programs who have traditionally been underrepresented in
109 such occupations; and

110 (4) Explore distance learning and articulation agreements to
111 facilitate degree or certification enhancement activities for students
112 enrolled in dental hygienist and dental assistant academic programs.

113 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a
114 Connecticut radiological and laboratory technology incentive program
115 administered by the Department of Higher Education.

116 (b) Within available appropriations, the program shall provide
117 grants to students enrolled in radiological technology and laboratory
118 technology education programs at any institution of higher education
119 approved by the Board of Governors of Higher Education. No student
120 shall receive a grant under the program for more than two years.
121 Maximum grants shall not exceed five thousand dollars per year. The
122 department shall ensure that at least ten per cent of the grant recipients
123 are minority students.

124 (c) A student who received grants under subsection (b) of this
125 section, and who is employed in the field of radiological technology or
126 as a qualified laboratory technician in an acute care hospital in this
127 state or any other health care institution in this state, as defined in
128 subsection (a) of section 19a-490 of the general statutes, shall be eligible
129 for reimbursement of federal or state educational loans up to a
130 maximum of two thousand five hundred dollars per year for up to
131 four years of such service.

132 (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this
133 section, the combined dollar value of grants and loan reimbursements
134 shall not exceed twenty thousand dollars per student.

135 (e) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003, the
136 Department of Higher Education may use up to two per cent of the
137 funds appropriated for purposes of this section for program
138 administration, promotion, recruitment and retention activities that are
139 designed to increase the number of students pursuing radiological
140 technology and laboratory technology careers at Connecticut
141 institutions of higher education.

142 (f) Not later than January 1, 2004, the Commissioner of Higher
143 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the
144 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment

