



**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 at any regional vocational-technical school, or (2)
9 completing the requirements of such a nursing, pharmacy or allied
10 health education program as a graduate student, provided such
11 student received a grant pursuant to this section for one year at the
12 undergraduate level. No student shall receive a grant under the
13 program for more than two years. Maximum grants shall not exceed
14 five thousand dollars per year. The department shall ensure that at
15 least ten per cent of the grant recipients are minority students who
16 transfer from a Connecticut regional community-technical college.

17 (c) A student who received grants under subsection (b) of this
18 section, and who is employed as a nurse, pharmacist or allied health

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

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

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

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

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

51 technologists, therapists and technicians.

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

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

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

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

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

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

82 and operation of the incentive program authorized under this section
83 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
84 cognizance of matters relating to education and public health and to
85 the select committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
86 matters relating to workforce development.

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

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

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

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

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

111 (4) Explore distance learning and articulation agreements to
112 facilitate degree or certification enhancement activities for students

113 enrolled in dental hygienist and dental assistant academic programs.

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

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

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

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

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

143 (f) Not later than January 1, 2004, the Commissioner of Higher

APP *Joint Favorable*