

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

Legislative Office Building, Room 5200
Hartford, CT 06106 ◊ (860) 240-0200
<http://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa>

sSB-1087

AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN THE STATE.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	79,000	81,000
Higher Ed., Off.	GF - Cost	Significant	Significant
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Cost	Significant	Significant

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

Section 1 requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish a program providing three-year grants to community-based primary care providers, within available appropriations, to expand access to care for the uninsured. This program may provide loan repayment to eligible primary care clinicians and registered nurses. The bill expands the types of eligible clinicians to include mental health care providers, among others.

Section 2 requires DPH to establish a five-year pilot program to recruit and retain mental health providers at federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), including psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychiatric advanced practice registered nurses.

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.3% of payroll in FY 22 and FY 23.

In order to implement Sections 1 and 2 DPH's Public Health Systems and Equity Office will need to hire two positions to reinstate and administer the State Loan Repayment Program and to develop the mental health care recruitment and retention pilot program.

A Health Program Associate position, starting at \$75,000 in FY 22, will develop and execute contracts with providers, define the target areas, conduct research, and ensure compliance with the program's statutory requirements and regulations. An Accountant position, starting at \$81,000 in FY 22, would be responsible for administering all fiscal requirements of this fund, including budget planning and implementation, tracking and monitoring of expenditure activities and financial reporting, as well as the drawdown of funds.

DPH will require additional funding to implement two grant programs as it has not administered or funded a State Loan Repayment Program in over 10 years.

Assuming the average number of practitioners receiving loan reimbursement payments would be 15 per year, DPH would incur costs of \$750,000 should a \$50,000 annual reimbursement be offered per practitioner. Establishing a five-year pilot program for the recruitment and retention of mental healthcare providers employed by FQHCs would result in significant costs as there are 16 FQHCs operating across the state. The costs would depend on the number of participating FQHCs and the amount of financial assistance.

The bill also results in a significant cost to the Office of Higher Education (OHE) associated with establishing a loan reimbursement program for psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychiatric APRNs who are employed at an FQHC for at least two years. It is unknown how many individuals would apply for and be eligible for the loan reimbursement program. If 20 eligible candidates were to be awarded grants annually, the average cost would be \$500,000. Additionally, OHE would require one part-time grant coordinator to oversee the program, as they currently do not have the staff available to do so. The part-time grant coordinator would cost approximately \$35,000

annually, with corresponding fringe benefits of \$14,455.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.