



Substitute Senate Bill No. 251

Special Act No. 22-9

AN ACT EXPANDING TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR CAREERS IN HEALTH CARE.

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

Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Office of Workforce Strategy, in collaboration with the Department of Public Health, the Labor Department, the Office of Higher Education, The University of Connecticut, The University of Connecticut Health Center, the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges and the Connecticut Hospital Association, shall develop an initiative to address the state's health care workforce shortage, including, but not limited to, behavioral and mental health care workers. Such initiative shall seek to increase the number of health care workers in the state through the offering of expanded and enhanced educational programs at institutions of higher education in the state. The program shall include, but not be limited to, the following: (1) Expansion of existing health care related academic programs to promote increased enrollment and retention of students in such programs; (2) development of alternative academic programs that are designed to assimilate displaced workers and other individuals who seek to make a career change into the health care workforce; (3) recruitment and retention of underserved populations in the health care workforce; (4) development of distance learning initiatives for

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individuals who seek to enter the health care workforce; and (5) development of on-the-job training initiatives that are designed to provide valuable work experience to those receiving the training and assist in alleviating health care workforce shortages, particularly in areas of the state with underserved populations.

(b) Not later than January 1, 2024, the Chief Workforce Officer shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the initiative developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and employment advancement, public health and labor and public employees.

Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) The Chief Workforce Officer, in consultation with members of the Connecticut Hospital Association and of community-based professional nursing organizations and representatives of the nursing home industry, the emergency medical service industry and assisted living associations, shall develop a plan to work with high schools in the state in order to encourage students to pursue careers as nurses, medical assistants, emergency department technicians, surgical assistants, behavioral and mental health care workers and other high demand careers in health care. Not later than January 1, 2023, the Chief Workforce Officer shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, such plan to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and employment advancement.

Approved May 23, 2022