

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R.

To amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to the shortage of medical laboratory personnel.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER __, 2022

Mr. _____ (for himself, Mr. _____) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to the shortage of medical laboratory personnel.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Medical Laboratory Personnel Shortage Relief Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. RESPONSE TO SHORTAGE OF MEDICAL LABORATORY PERSONNEL; PROGRAMS OF HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.

(a) SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAMS.—Section 737 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 293a) is amended by adding at the end the following subsection:

“(e) SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENTISTS, MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNICIANS, AND OTHER MEDICAL LABORATORY PERSONNEL.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program of scholarships and loan repayment for the purpose of alleviating the shortage of medical laboratory personnel. The scholarship and loan repayment program shall include a period of obligated service for recipients in a designated health professional shortage area, or other area where there is a

shortage of medical laboratory personnel. The Secretary may model the program after the scholarship and loan repayment programs under sections 338A and 338B.

“(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Schools of allied health, and health care institution-based programs training medical laboratory personnel, are eligible to receive awards under paragraph (1).

“(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this subsection, there are authorized to be appropriated \$25,000,000 in fiscal year 2022, and such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2022 through 2026. Such authorization is in addition to other authorizations of appropriations that are available for such purpose.”.

(b) MEDICAL LABORATORY PERSONNEL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.—

(1) In general

The Secretary may make grants to, or enter into contracts with, an accredited public or nonprofit private hospital, school or allied health, or a public or private nonprofit entity which the Secretary has determined is capable of carrying out such grant or contract--

(A) to plan, develop, operate, or participate in an accredited medical laboratory professional training program, as defined by the Secretary;

(B) to plan, develop, and operate a program for the training of medical laboratory personnel who plan to teach in a medical laboratory educational program;

(2) Duration of awards

The period during which payments are made to an entity from an award of a grant or contract under this subsection shall be 5 years.

(c) Capacity building in medical laboratory science

(1) In general

The Secretary may make grants to or enter into contracts with accredited schools of allied health to establish, maintain, or improve--

(A) academic units or programs that improve clinical teaching and research in fields defined in subsection (d)(12); or

(B) programs that enhance recruitment, training, and faculty development.

(2) Preference in making awards under this subsection

In making awards of grants and contracts under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give preference to any qualified applicant for such an award that agrees to expend the award for the purpose of--

- (A) establishing academic units or programs in fields defined in subsection (d)(12); or
- (B) substantially expanding such units or programs.

(3) Priorities in making awards

In awarding grants or contracts under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give priority to qualified applicants that--

- (A) proposes a collaborative project between academic programs to address medical laboratory needs as identified due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic;
- (B) proposes innovative approaches to clinical teaching;
- (C) have a record of training individuals who are from under represented minority groups or from a rural or disadvantaged background;
- (D) teach trainees the skills to provide interprofessional, integrated care through collaboration among health professionals;
- (E) provide training in cultural competency and health literacy.

(4) Duration of awards

The period during which payments are made to an entity from an award of a grant or contract under this subsection shall be 5 years.

(c) Authorization of appropriations

(1) In general

For purposes of carrying out this section there are authorized to be appropriated \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2022, and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026.

(d) DEFINITION OF MEDICAL LABORATORY PERSONNEL.—Section 799B of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 295p) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(12) The term ‘medical laboratory personnel’ means allied health professionals who are medical laboratory scientists, cytotechnologists, histotechnologists, phlebotomists, or medical laboratory technicians who examine materials derived from the human body for the

purpose of providing information for the diagnosis, prevention, or treatment of any disease or impairment of, or the assessment of the health of, human beings.”.

DRAFT