

STATE OF NEW YORK

3842--A

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 27, 2017

Introduced by Sens. RITCHIE, HELMING, SEWARD -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education -- recommitted to the Committee on Higher Education in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- reported favorably from said committee and committed to the Committee on Finance -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to creating a regents large animal veterinarian loan forgiveness program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Section 605 of the education law is amended by adding a new subdivision 13 to read as follows:

13. Regents large animal veterinarian loan forgiveness program. Regents veterinarian loan forgiveness awards shall be awarded annually to large animal veterinarians who agree to practice veterinary medicine in an area of New York state designated by the regents as having a shortage of large animal veterinarians. Such awards shall be classified and allocated in accordance with regents rules.

a. Eligibility. (1) The applicant must be a resident of New York state and licensed to practice veterinary medicine.

(2) The applicant must have completed a professional residency program within the five years immediately preceding the period for which the first award would be granted, or be within two years of completion of an accredited residency program in large animal veterinary medicine.

(3) The applicant must agree to practice large animal veterinary medicine in an area in New York state designated as having a shortage of large animal veterinarians. The regents, after consultation with the commissioners of agriculture and markets and health, shall designate those regions and facilities of New York state which have a shortage of

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD08827-02-8

1 large animal veterinarians for the purposes of this section and estab-
2 lish relative rankings thereof.

3 b. Selection. The commissioner, in consultation with the commissioners
4 of agriculture and markets and health, shall establish criteria for the
5 selection of participants in the program. An applicant must satisfy at
6 least one of the criteria established. A priority shall be accorded to
7 any applicant who is completing the second year of the service require-
8 ment and is reapplying for a new award. The criteria shall include but
9 not be limited to the following:

10 (i) reapplication for a new award by a person who is completing the
11 second year of a service requirement;

12 (ii) receipt of specific training in large animal veterinary medicine;

13 (iii) receipt of specific training or experience in serving a shortage
14 area;

15 (iv) receipt of specific training or experience matching a specific
16 large animal medical need existing in a shortage area; and

17 (v) agreement pursuant to paragraph d of this subdivision to practice
18 in an area determined by the regents to have a severe shortage of large
19 animal veterinary services.

20 c. Notification. (1) The commissioner shall then forward approved
21 applications to the president and shall notify unsuccessful applicants.

22 (2) The president shall verify the approved applicants':

23 (i) eligibility; and

24 (ii) total undergraduate and veterinary medical school student
25 expense;

26 (3) The president shall notify applicants of their award entitlement.

27 d. Service requirement. The commissioner shall convert to a student
28 loan the full amount of the award given pursuant to this section, plus
29 interest, according to a schedule to be determined by the commissioner
30 if: (1) two years after the completion of the residency degree program
31 it is found that a recipient is not practicing large animal veterinary
32 medicine in a specific area designated as having a shortage of large
33 animal veterinarians; or (2) a recipient has not practiced large animal
34 veterinary medicine in a specific area designated as having a shortage
35 of large animal veterinarians for five of the seven years after the
36 completion of the residency degree program; or (3) a recipient fails to
37 complete their residency degree program; or (4) a recipient fails to
38 receive or maintain their license to practice veterinary medicine; or
39 (5) a recipient fails to respond to requests by the commissioner for the
40 status of his or her academic or professional progress. The terms and
41 conditions of this paragraph shall be deferred for any interruption in
42 graduate study or employment as established by the rules and regulations
43 of the commissioner. Any obligation to comply with such provisions as
44 outlined in this section shall be cancelled upon the death of the recip-
45 ient. Notwithstanding any provisions of this paragraph to the contrary,
46 the commissioner is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to
47 provide for the waiver or suspension of any financial obligation which
48 would involve extreme hardship.

49 e. Reporting. A recipient of an award shall report annually to the New
50 York state higher education services corporation, the department of
51 agriculture and markets and the department of health on forms prescribed
52 by the president, as to the performance of the required services,
53 commencing with the calendar year in which the recipient begins to prac-
54 tice large animal veterinary medicine in a shortage area and continuing
55 until the recipient shall have completed, or it is determined that he or
56 she shall not be obligated to complete, the required services. If the

recipient shall fail to file any report required hereunder within thirty days of written notice to the recipient, mailed to the address shown on the last application for an award or last report filed, whichever is later, the president of the corporation may impose a fine of up to one thousand dollars. The president shall have the discretion to waive the filing of a report, excuse a delay in filing or a failure to file a report, or waive or reduce any fine imposed for good cause shown.

f. Other awards. Award recipients shall be eligible to apply for one additional award.

§ 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 672-c to read as follows:

§ 672-c. Regents large animal veterinarian loan forgiveness program.

1. Number and certification. Eighty regents large animal veterinarian loan forgiveness awards shall be awarded each year. Such awards shall be allocated as provided in article thirteen of this title to eligible large animal veterinarians as certified to the president by the commissioner.

2. Calculation of award amounts. Each award shall consist of two consecutive annual loan forgiveness payments. Each of the annual payments shall be for an amount equal to the total of undergraduate and veterinary medical school student loan expense or ten thousand dollars, whichever is less. The president shall be responsible for calculating the dollar amount of each award that eligible candidates may receive from this program. For the purposes of this section, student loan expense shall mean the cumulative total of the annual student loans covering the cost of attendance at an undergraduate institution and/or veterinary medical school. Interest paid or due on student loans that an applicant has taken out for use in paying for such undergraduate and/or veterinarian medical education shall be considered eligible for reimbursement under this program.

3. Award disbursement. a. Annual award disbursements shall be the responsibility of the president and shall occur prior to the beginning of each of the required terms of service as specified in the service contract. The board of trustees of the higher education services corporation shall adopt rules and regulations regarding criteria for determining successful completion of the service contract and any appeal process that may be required to implement this paragraph upon recommendation of the president in consultation with the commissioner.

b. The disbursement of the second annual award shall be dependent upon successful completion of the first year requirement of the service contract as defined by the president as well as other criteria set forth in this section.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the first of July next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.