AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing the New York state COVID-19 health care worker loan forgiveness program

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

Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 679-k to read as follows:

§ 679-k. The New York state COVID-19 health care worker loan forgiveness program. 1. Eligibility. To be eligible for an award pursuant to this section, applicants shall be a health care worker who was practicing at a hospital, general practitioner office, nursing home, or any other health care practice or facility and who provided medical care at the time of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) state of emergency.

2. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "health care worker" shall mean any person working as a nurse, registered professional nurse, licensed practical nurse, nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, certified nurse assistant, medical assistant, physician assistant, specialist assistant, pathologists' assistant, medical technician, diagnostic medical sonographer, emergency medical technician, paramedic, phlebotomist, clinical support aid, or immediate treatment assistant during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) state of emergency.

(b) "state of emergency" means the state of emergency declared by executive order two hundred two that began on March seventh, two thousand twenty.

3. Awards. The corporation shall grant awards in an amount up to:

(a) five thousand dollars per year for four years to recipients who earned a bachelor’s degree, provided that no recipients shall receive an award that exceeds the total remaining balance of his or her student loan debt from state student loans, federal student loans or private student loans made by commercial entities that are subject to govern-
mental examination for degrees and/or certifications directly pertaining to the recipient's position as a health care worker; and

(b) two thousand five hundred dollars per year for four years to eligible applicants who have not earned a bachelor's degree, provided that no applicant shall receive an award that exceeds the total remaining balance of his or her student loan debt from state student loans, federal student loans or private student loans made by commercial entities that are subject to governmental examination for degrees and/or certifications directly pertaining to the recipient's position as a health care worker.

4. Rules and regulations. The corporation is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations and may promulgate emergency regulations necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this section.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.