STATE OF NEW YORK

1154

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 7, 2021

Introduced by Sen. RITCHIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to creating the New York state rural doctors and nurses 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. New York state rural doctors and nurses loan forgiveness program. 1. Purpose. The president shall grant student loan forgiveness awards for the purpose of attracting doctors and nurses to be employed in rural areas throughout New York state on a full-time basis.

2. Eligibility. To be eligible for an award pursuant to this section, applicants shall:

(a) have graduated and obtained a degree from an approved New York state college or university;

(b) be employed as a doctor of medicine, doctor of osteopathy, professional or practical nurse, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist in New York state in accordance with sections sixty-five hundred twenty-four, sixty-nine hundred five, sixty-nine hundred six, sixty-nine hundred ten and sixty-nine hundred eleven of this chapter;

(c) comply with subdivision five of section six hundred sixty-one of this part; and

(d) make a commitment to practice in a rural area for the duration of the award.

3. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the term "rural" shall mean a tract or county defined by the health resources and services administration as being rural or eligible for a rural health grant.

4. Priority. Such awards shall be made annually to applicants in the following priority:

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

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(a) First priority shall be given to applicants who have received payment of an award pursuant to this section in a prior year and who, in the year prior to application, are doctors or nurses in a rural area; and

(b) Second priority shall be given to applicants who have not received payment of an award pursuant to this section in a prior year and who are doctors or nurses in a rural area in the year prior to such application.

5. Awards. The corporation shall grant awards pursuant to the amount appropriated for such purpose and based on availability of funds in an amount up to five thousand dollars to individuals who are employed full-time as doctors or nurses for the year prior to such application, provided that no recipient shall receive an award that exceeds the total remaining balance of the student loan debt pursuant to this section, in excess of twenty thousand dollars.

6. 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. In the event that there are more applicants who have the same priority, as provided in subdivision four of this section, than there are remaining awards, the corporation shall provide in regulation the method of distributing the remaining number of such awards, which may include a lottery or other form of random selection.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall have become a law.