STATE OF NEW YORK

2664

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 22, 2021

Introduced by Sens. RITCHIE, AKSHAR, GALLIVAN, HELMING -- 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 providing loan forgiveness for mental health nurses

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 mental health nurse loan forgiveness incentive program. 1. Purpose. The president shall grant student loan forgiveness awards for the purpose of alleviating the burden of student loan debt for mental health nurses in New York state. Such awards shall be made on a competitive basis as promulgated by the corporation for such purposes, to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria. Such rules and regulations shall include provisions for the consideration of applicants who are economically disadvantaged.

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) have an outstanding student loan debt from obtaining such degree;

(c) be employed as a professional or practical nurse, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist in New York state in accordance with sections six thousand nine hundred five, six thousand nine hundred six, six thousand nine hundred ten and six thousand nine hundred eleven of this chapter;

(d) apply for this program within two years of college graduation;

(e) comply with subdivisions three and five of section six hundred sixty-one of this part;

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

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(f) make a commitment to practice in a tract or county defined by the health resources and services administration as being "rural" or eligible for a rural health grant; and

(g) make a commitment to practice in state psychiatric hospitals, hospital in-patient psychiatric units, addiction treatment centers, behavioral health clinics or a county run mental health program for the duration of the award.

3. Awards. The corporation shall grant such awards within amounts appropriated for such purposes and based on the availability of funds.

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