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MEMORANDUM

To: Chairman Thomas
Members of the House Committee on Education

From: The Office of Revisor of Statutes

Date: February 12, 2024

Subject: HB 2645 – Amendments to the Nursing Service Scholarship Program.

House Bill No. 2645 (HB 2645) would make several amendments to the Nursing Service Scholarship Program (Program). Currently, applicants for a nursing service scholarship must enter into an agreement with a sponsoring healthcare facility or a state agency that employs nurses. Under the agreement, the sponsor will provide one-half of the financial assistance and the scholarship recipient agrees to work as a nurse for the sponsor for the length of time the recipient received financial assistance. The executive officer of the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) determines which applicants qualify for a scholarship after consulting with the Nursing Service Scholarship Review Committee. Only 250 scholarships may be awarded each year. Of those, 100 are reserved for students with a sponsor from a rural area. Priority for scholarships is given to students with a sponsor that is a mental health or treatment facility. If a scholarship recipient fails to satisfy their agreement obligations, then the recipient must repay that portion of their scholarship that was paid by the State plus interest.

HB 2645 would make the following changes to the Program:

- There would no longer be a requirement for a scholarship applicant to have a sponsor. All references to a “sponsor” would be stricken from the statutes.
- Additionally, the State would fund the scholarship amount in full.
- The annual limit on the number of scholarships awarded would be stricken. Also, all provisions relating to sponsors from a rural area would be stricken. The only priority criteria would be the financial need of the applicant.
- The bill would add the requirement that each applicant complete the free application for federal student aid each academic year.

- The service requirement would no longer obligate the scholarship recipient to work for a sponsor. However, six months after obtaining a license, the recipient must engage in the practice of nursing for the length of time the recipient received financial assistance.
- Failure by the recipient to satisfy the service requirement would result in the recipient having to repay the amount of financial assistance received plus interest. The interest rate would be set at 5% per annum and begin accruing on the date the obligation to repay commenced (see 2024 HB 2644 for further details on this proposed amendment).
- The bill abolishes the Nursing Service Scholarship Review Committee by repealing K.S.A. 72-3299 (a copy of which is attached hereto). The KBOR would adopt rules and regulations for administering the Program without consulting the committee and the executive director would award scholarships without the review and advice of the committee.

If enacted, HB 2645 would become effective on publication in the Kansas Register.

74-3299. Nursing service scholarship review committee; composition and appointment; terms; organization; powers and duties; meetings; expenses and allowances. (a) There is hereby created the nursing service scholarship review committee which shall consist of the following members appointed by the governor: One member representing Kansas hospitals; one member representing Kansas adult care homes; one member representing Kansas registered nurses; one member representing nursing education programs other than at a state educational institution; and the chief executive officer of a state educational institution which has a school of nursing.

(b) The members of the nursing service scholarship review committee appointed by the governor shall be appointed for three-year terms and shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. Upon the vacancy of a position appointed by the governor, the governor shall appoint a person of like qualifications to fill such position. If a vacancy occurs prior to the expiration of a term, the governor shall appoint a person of like qualifications to fill such position for the unexpired term.

(c) The nursing service scholarship review committee shall elect annually from among its members a chairperson. The committee shall meet on the call of the chairperson or upon the request of a majority of the members of the committee. A majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

(d) The nursing service scholarship review committee shall provide oversight of the nursing service scholarship program and shall be advisory to the executive officer and the state board of regents in the administration of such program. The committee shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be specified by law.

(e) The executive officer and other office staff of the state board of regents shall provide staff assistance to the nursing service scholarship review committee.

(f) The members of the nursing service scholarship review committee who are not state officers or employees and who are attending meetings of such committee, or attending a subcommittee meeting thereof authorized by such committee, shall be eligible for amounts provided in subsection (e) of K.S.A. [75-3223](#), and amendments thereto. Amounts paid under this subsection (f) shall be from appropriations to the state board of regents upon warrants of the director of accounts and reports issued pursuant to vouchers approved by the executive officer or a person designated by the executive officer.

History: L. 1989, ch. 223, § 9; L. 2001, ch. 151, § 18; July 1.