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MEMORANDUM

To: Senate Committee on Education
From: Kansas Office of Revisor of Statutes
Date: March 6, 2024
Subject: HB 2645—Nursing Service Scholarship Program

House Bill 2645 as amended by House Committee would amend the nursing service scholarship program.

Currently, the nursing service scholarship program requires applicants for a nursing service scholarship to enter into agreements with a sponsoring healthcare facility or a state agency that employs nurses. Under such agreement, the sponsor provides one-half of the financial assistance and the scholarship recipient agrees to work as a nurse upon graduation and licensure for the sponsor for the length of time the recipient received financial assistance. The executive officer of the state board of regents determines which applicants qualify for a scholarship after consulting with the nursing service scholarship review committee. The number of scholarships that may be awarded each year is limited to 250 scholarships and of those, 100 are reserved for students with a sponsor from a rural area. If a scholarship recipient fails to satisfy the obligations in the agreement, the recipient must repay that portion of their scholarship that was paid by the state with interest at the federal PLUS rate plus five percentage points.

HB 2645 would make several changes to the nursing service scholarship program, including:

- Eliminating the limitation on the number of scholarships that may be awarded;
- Requiring each scholarship recipient to complete the free application for federal student aid each academic year;
- Changing the requirement for sponsorship to an option for sponsorship;
- Removing the provisions relating to rural areas;

- Authorizing the executive officer to establish the amount of each scholarship. If the applicant has a sponsor, the amount of the scholarship would not exceed the amount set by the executive officer multiplied by 125%;
- Requiring the scholarship recipient to engage in the practice of nursing in Kansas for the length of time the recipient received financial assistance instead of being obligated to work for a sponsor, unless such recipient has a scholarship agreement with a sponsor, then the recipient must satisfy the employment obligation contained in the scholarship agreement;
- Setting the interest rate on repayments of scholarship amounts for failure to satisfy agreement obligations to a flat 5%; and
- Abolishing the nursing service scholarship review committee by repealing K.S.A. 74-3299 (see page 3 of this memorandum for the text of this statute, so the board of regents would adopt rules and regulations to administer the program without consulting the committee and the executive officer would award scholarships without the review and advice of the committee.

HB 2645 would take effect upon 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.