

Medical Loan Programs; AO-K to Work Program; High School Equivalency Credential; Senate Sub. for HB 2060

Senate Sub. for HB 2060 makes various technical changes to statutes, including changes to law relating to the Drivers' Training School License Act. The bill also amends law relating to the State Medical Student Loan Program and the Medical Residency Bridging Program (loan programs) and establishes an obstetrics and gynecology (OBGYN) medical loan repayment program. Additionally, the bill authorizes several items that qualified students must be provided reasonable access to under the AO-K to Work Program. Similarly, the bill amends law to include individuals who receive a high school equivalency (HSE) credential, or who are pursuing an HSE credential, in the calculation of and subsequent distribution of performance-based payments for community colleges and technical colleges.

Drivers' Training School License Act

The bill makes technical changes to the Drivers' Training School License Act to ensure that community colleges, rather than students enrolled in community colleges, receive payments from the State Safety Fund for the number of students who have completed a driver training course during the past school year.

Medical Loan Programs

Under continuing law, the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) administers the two loan programs to incentivize the practice of medicine in certain areas of the state and in certain facilities of the state. The Kansas Medical Student Loan program provides tuition and a stipend to undergraduate students enrolled in or admitted to the University of Kansas School of Medicine (KU School of Medicine) who enter into agreements to practice primary care medicine or psychiatry in areas of need in the state.

University of Kansas School of Medicine Residencies

The bill increases the number of medical student loan agreements available under the loan programs at the KU School of Medicine from 6 to up to 12. The bill also adds a provision specifying that the KU School of Medicine may not prohibit nor create substantial impediments to students in the programs from switching between approved postgraduate residency training programs.

Medical Residency Training Programs in Obstetrics and Gynecology

The bill includes medical residency training programs in OBGYN as part of the postgraduate medical residency programs that a person may enter into in order to qualify for state medical student and medical residency loan assistance.

Exemptions

The bill exempts a person, or a person's spouse, who is unable to satisfy their obligations due to active military service from paying the 15 percent annual interest rate on any moneys received under such loan programs. Similarly, the bill allows a person participating in a health-related fellowship to postpone the obligation to engage in the practice of medicine and surgery for not more than one year. [Note: Under current law, any person who fails to complete an approved residency training program or fails to satisfy the obligation to engage in the full-time practice of medicine and surgery within a service commitment area for the required period of time must repay all money received from the loan programs, plus accumulated interest at an annual rate of 15 percent.]

Restrictions on Practice During Service Requirement

The bill prohibits a person who completes an approved OBGYN residency training program from performing or inducing, or attempting to perform or induce, an abortion during the time such person is satisfying the service requirement under the loan programs. It also prohibits such person from creating or working for a clinic that performs or induces abortions during that time period. A person who fails to satisfy the service requirement due to the performance or inducement, or attempt at such, of an abortion is required to repay all money received pursuant to the loan, plus accumulated interest at an annual rate of 15 percent. [Note: A person who performs or induces, or attempts to perform or induce, an abortion in the case of a medical emergency or in the case of a pregnancy resulting from rape or incest is not deemed to have failed to complete the service requirement.]

Funds and Scholarships

The bill also establishes the OBGYN Medical Loan Repayment Fund and the OBGYN Medical Residency Bridging Fund to be used for OBGYN residency training programs.

The bill authorizes the Kansas Board of Regents to award osteopathic medical service scholarships to Kansas residents who are undergraduate students enrolled in or admitted to pre-accredited schools of osteopathic medicine.

AO-K to Work Program

Under current law, the Kansas Board of Regents awards an HSE credential to qualified students who, among other factors, successfully complete an approved AO-K career pathway and receive the industry-recognized credential appropriate to the completed pathway. Students are to be provided reasonable access to all available student resources of the adult education program, the participating technical or community college, and the appropriate community partners.

The bill adds several items to the available student resources that qualified students shall be provided reasonable access to, including books, tools, and personal materials that are required to participate in an AO-K career pathway program and industry examinations.

The bill also provides for financial assistance for books, tools, personal materials, and industry examinations. The financial assistance provided is the aggregate amount of the cost of books, tools, personal materials, and industry examinations for the AO-K career pathway program in which the student is enrolled and receiving assistance, minus the aggregate amount of all other aid awarded to the student. The financial assistance is subject to appropriations, and the amount of financial assistance provided for each student may not exceed \$500.

High School Equivalency Credential

Under continuing law, the Kansas Board of Regents distributes incentive payments to each community college and technical college for individuals who have received a General Educational Development (GED) credential or who are pursuing a GED while enrolled in an eligible career technical education program.

The bill requires the Kansas Board of Regents to also distribute incentive payments to community colleges and technical colleges for individuals who have received an HSE credential or who are pursuing an HSE credential while enrolled in an eligible career technical education program.

[*Note:* According to the Kansas Board of Regents, a GED credential is issued after the successful completion of the GED examination, a four-subject high school equivalency test. A HSE credential is issued after successful completion of the Kansas Pathway to Career High School Equivalency program, which allows a student who is at least 21 years old to work toward their high school completion as well as obtain a college certificate or credential.]