

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7279

To provide for a wage differential program to support new nursing school faculty members.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 30, 2026

Ms. BONAMICI (for herself, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Ms. UNDERWOOD, and Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To provide for a wage differential program to support new nursing school faculty members.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Nurse Faculty Short-
5 age Reduction Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. NURSE FACULTY DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.**

7 Section 846A of the Public Health Service Act (42
8 U.S.C. 297n–1) is amended—

9 (1) by amending subsection (a) to read as fol-
10 lows:

1 “(a) IN GENERAL.—To increase the number of quali-
2 fied nursing faculty, the Secretary may—

3 “(1) enter into an agreement with any accred-
4 ited school of nursing for the establishment and op-
5 eration of a student loan fund in accordance with
6 subsection (b); and

7 “(2) award nurse faculty grants in accordance
8 with subsection (c).”;

9 (2) in subsection (b)—

10 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A)
11 through (D) of paragraph (2) as clauses (i)
12 through (iv), respectively, and adjusting the
13 margins accordingly;

14 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (1)
15 through (5) as subparagraphs (A) through (E),
16 respectively, and adjusting the margins accord-
17 ingly;

18 (C) in subparagraph (C), as so redesign-
19 ated, by striking “subsection (c)” and insert-
20 ing “paragraph (2)”; and

21 (D) by striking “(b) AGREEMENTS.—Each
22 agreement entered into under subsection (a)
23 shall—” and inserting the following:

24 “(b) SCHOOL OF NURSING STUDENT LOAN FUND.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each agreement entered
2 into under subsection (a)(1) shall—”;

3 (3) in subsection (c)—

4 (A) by striking “subsection (a)” each place
5 it appears and inserting “subsection (a)(1)”;

6 (B) in paragraph (3), by redesignating
7 subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and
8 (ii), respectively, and adjusting the margins ac-
9 cordingly;

10 (C) in paragraph (6), by redesignating
11 subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and
12 (ii), respectively, and adjusting the margins ac-
13 cordingly;

14 (D) by redesignating paragraphs (1)
15 through (6) as subparagraphs (A) through (F),
16 respectively, and adjusting the margins accord-
17 ingly; and

18 (E) in subparagraph (F)(ii), as so redesign-
19 ated, by striking “subsection (e)” and insert-
20 ing “paragraph (4)”;

21 (4) in subsection (e), by striking “subsection
22 (c)(6)(B)” and inserting “paragraph (2)(F)(ii)”;

23 (5) by redesignating subsections (c) through (e)
24 as paragraphs (2) through (4), respectively, and ad-
25 justing the margins accordingly; and

1 (6) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(c) NURSE FACULTY DEMONSTRATION PRO-
3 GRAM.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-
5 lish and carry out a demonstration program de-
6 scribed in subsection (a)(2) under which eligible
7 schools of nursing receive a grant for purposes of
8 supplementing the salaries of eligible nursing faculty
9 members to enhance recruitment and retention of
10 nursing faculty members.

11 “(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to re-
12 ceive a grant under this subsection, an entity shall—

13 “(A) be a school of nursing; and

14 “(B) submit an application to the Sec-
15 retary, at such time, in such manner, and con-
16 taining such information as the Secretary may
17 require, including—

18 “(i)(I) to the extent such information
19 is available to the school of nursing, the
20 salary history of nursing faculty at such
21 school who previously were nurses in clin-
22 ical practice, for the most recent 3-year pe-
23 riod ending on the date of application, ad-
24 justed for inflation as appropriate and bro-

1 ken down by credentials, experience, and
2 levels of education of such nurses; or

3 “(II) if the information described in
4 subclause (I) is not available, information
5 on the average local salary of nurses in
6 clinical practice, adjusted for inflation as
7 appropriate and broken down by creden-
8 tials, experience, and levels of education of
9 the individual nurses, in accordance with
10 such requirements as the Secretary may
11 specify;

12 “(ii) an attestation of the average
13 nursing faculty salary at the school of
14 nursing during the most recent 3-year pe-
15 riod prior to the date of application, ad-
16 justed for inflation, as appropriate, broken
17 down by credentials, experience, and levels
18 of education of such faculty members;

19 “(iii) the number of nursing faculty
20 member vacancies at the entity at the time
21 of application, and the entity’s projection
22 of such vacancies over the ensuing 5-year
23 period; and

24 “(iv) a description of the entity’s
25 plans to identify funding sources to

1 sustainably continue, after the 3-year
2 grant period, the salary available to the eli-
3 gible nursing faculty member pursuant to
4 the program under this subsection during
5 such grant program and to retain eligible
6 nursing faculty members after the end of
7 the grant period.

8 “(3) AWARDS.—A grant awarded under this
9 subsection, with respect to supporting eligi-
10 ble nursing faculty members, shall—

11 “(A) be awarded to the school of nursing
12 to supplement the salaries of eligible faculty
13 members at the school of nursing, annually, for
14 up to a 3-year period, in an amount equal to,
15 for each eligible nursing faculty member at the
16 eligible entity during the grant period, the dif-
17 ference between—

18 “(i) the average salary of nurses in
19 clinical practice, as submitted under sub-
20 clause (I) or (II) of paragraph (2)(B)(i);
21 and

22 “(ii) the greater of—

23 “(I) the salary for the eligible
24 nursing faculty member at the school
25 of nursing; or

1 “(II) the average nursing faculty
2 salary, as submitted under paragraph
3 (2)(B)(ii) for faculty members with
4 the same or similar credentials and
5 level of education;

6 “(B) notwithstanding section 803(a), be
7 used in its entirety to supplement the eligible
8 faculty member’s salary; and

9 “(C) be conditioned upon the school of
10 nursing maintaining, for each year in which the
11 award is made as described in subparagraph
12 (A), a salary for such faculty member at a level
13 that is not less than the greater of the amount
14 under subclause (I) or (II) of subparagraph
15 (A)(ii).

16 “(4) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this
17 subsection, the Secretary shall ensure the equitable
18 geographic distribution of awards, and shall give pri-
19 ority to applications from schools of nursing that
20 demonstrate—

21 “(A) the greatest need for such grant,
22 which may be based upon the financial cir-
23 cumstances of the school of nursing, the num-
24 ber of eligible nurse faculty members, the

1 planned number of students to be trained or ad-
2 mitted off a wait list;

3 “(B) training or partnerships to serve vul-
4 nerable patient populations, such as through
5 the location or activity of a school in a health
6 professional shortage area (as defined in section
7 332); or

8 “(C) recruitment and retention of faculty
9 from underrepresented populations.

10 “(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in
11 this subsection precludes a school of nursing or an
12 eligible nursing faculty member receiving an award
13 under this section from obtaining or receiving any
14 other form of Federal support or funding.

15 “(6) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the
16 date of enactment of the Nurse Faculty Shortage
17 Reduction Act of 2026, the Secretary shall submit to
18 the Committee on Finance and the Committee on
19 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Sen-
20 ate and the Committee on Ways and Means and the
21 Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House
22 of Representatives, a report that evaluates the pro-
23 gram established under this subsection, including—

24 “(A) the impact of such program on re-
25 cruitment and retention rates of nursing fac-

1 ulty, as available, and specifically for each fac-
2 ulty member participating in the program; and

3 “(B) recommendations and considerations
4 for Congress on continuing the program under
5 this subsection.

6 “(7) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

7 “(A) ELIGIBLE NURSING FACULTY MEM-
8 BER.—The term ‘eligible nursing faculty mem-
9 ber’ means a nursing faculty member who—

10 “(i) was hired by a school of nursing
11 within the 2-year period preceding the sub-
12 mission of an application under paragraph
13 (2), or a prospective nursing faculty mem-
14 ber;

15 “(ii) is currently employed at the
16 school of nursing and who demonstrates
17 the need for such support;

18 “(iii) previously worked as a nurse in
19 clinical practice or as a nurse faculty mem-
20 ber at another school of nursing; or

21 “(iv) may work on a part-time basis
22 as a nursing faculty member, for whom
23 such award amounts described in para-
24 graph (3) shall be prorated relative to the

1 amount of time participating in part-time
2 teaching.

3 “(B) INFLATION.—The term ‘inflation’
4 means the Consumer Price Index for all urban
5 consumers (all items; U.S. city average).

6 “(8) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
7 To carry out this subsection, there is authorized to
8 be appropriated \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years
9 2027 through 2031.”.

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