

IN THE SENATE

SENATE BILL NO. 1223

BY HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO THE PERSONNEL SYSTEM; AMENDING CHAPTER 53, TITLE 67, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION 67-5339, IDAHO CODE, TO AUTHORIZE A LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR PHYSICIANS, PSYCHOLOGISTS AND MIDDLELEVEL PRACTITIONERS AT CERTAIN STATE HOSPITALS, TO PROVIDE LIMITATIONS ON THE PROGRAM, TO PROVIDE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE PROGRAM, TO PROVIDE FOR THE LENGTH OF THE PROGRAM AND TO PROVIDE FOR AMOUNTS TO BE REIMBURSED.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. That Chapter 53, Title 67, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a NEW SECTION, to be known and designated as Section 67-5339, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

67-5339. LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM. (1) In order for the Idaho department of health and welfare to attract and retain physicians, psychologists and midlevel practitioners to positions at state hospital north and state hospital south, it is necessary to offer candidates for such positions and current employees in those positions an educational loan repayment program.

(2) This loan repayment program shall be limited to the repayment of outstanding loans by eligible employees while obtaining undergraduate or graduate education by the employee for school tuition or other reasonable education expenses.

(3) The division administrator of the Idaho department of health and welfare division of behavioral health and the administrators of state hospital north and state hospital south shall have the authority to offer, subject to appropriation and as described herein and by rules that the Idaho department of health and welfare is authorized to promulgate, an educational loan repayment program to current employees and prospective candidates for the following positions:

(a) Physician: Any job classification within state hospital north or state hospital south that provides psychiatric care as a psychiatrist or medical or clinical oversight of direct services as a physician and requires a professional license from the Idaho board of medicine;

(b) Psychologist: Any job classification within state hospital north or state hospital south that provides psychological testing, counseling, senior designated examinations and expert testimony as a psychologist to patients and requires a doctorate level professional license as a psychologist from the Idaho bureau of occupational licenses; and

(c) Midlevel practitioner: Any job classification within state hospital north or state hospital south that provides medical or psychiatric care as a nurse practitioner or physician assistant to patients and requires a professional license from the Idaho board of medicine or the Idaho board of nursing.

1 (4) Before becoming eligible for the educational loan repayment pro-  
2 gram described in this section, an employee shall have been employed by state  
3 hospital north or state hospital south for no fewer than two thousand eighty  
4 (2,080) credited state service hours prior to the first loan disbursement  
5 under the provisions of this section.

6 (5) Loan disbursements made pursuant to this section shall be limited  
7 to a period of four (4) years following the employee's initial eligibility.

8 (6) Loan disbursements made pursuant to this section shall not exceed  
9 an eligible employee's loan balance and shall be made as follows:

10 (a) Physician reimbursements. A single yearly reimbursement may be  
11 made to an eligible physician not to exceed:

12 (i) Fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the employee's first  
13 year of eligibility;

14 (ii) Fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the employee's second  
15 year of eligibility;

16 (iii) Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for the employee's third  
17 year of eligibility; and

18 (iv) Twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the employee's  
19 fourth year of eligibility.

20 (b) Psychologist reimbursements. A single yearly reimbursement may be  
21 made to an eligible psychologist not to exceed:

22 (i) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the employee's first year  
23 of eligibility;

24 (ii) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the employee's second  
25 year of eligibility;

26 (iii) Fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the employee's third  
27 year of eligibility; and

28 (iv) Fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the employee's fourth  
29 year of eligibility.

30 (c) Midlevel practitioner reimbursements. A single yearly reimburse-  
31 ment may be made to an eligible midlevel practitioner not to exceed:

32 (i) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the employee's first year  
33 of eligibility;

34 (ii) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the employee's second  
35 year of eligibility;

36 (iii) Fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the employee's third  
37 year of eligibility; and

38 (iv) Fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the employee's fourth  
39 year of eligibility.