

HOUSE BILL 545

F2

4lr2499
CF SB 441

By: **Delegate Mireku–North**

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 2024

Assigned to: Appropriations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program – Nancy Grasmick**
3 **Public School Professional Award – Public School Nurses**

4 FOR the purpose of expanding the Nancy Grasmick Public School Professional Award
5 within the Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program to include public
6 school nurses; and generally relating to loan repayment assistance for public school
7 nurses.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Education
10 Section 18–1501 through 18–1503 and 18–1506
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
14 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article – Education**

16 18–1501.

17 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

18 (b) (1) “Eligible field of employment” means employment in the State by an
19 organization, institution, association, society, or corporation that is exempt from taxation
20 under § 501(c)(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

21 (2) “Eligible field of employment” includes employment by the State or any
22 local government in the State, but does not include being employed as a judicial clerk in
23 any court.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (c) "Higher education loan" means any loan for undergraduate or graduate study
2 that is obtained for tuition, educational expenses, or living expenses from:

3 (1) A college or university, government, or commercial source; or

4 (2) An organization, institution, association, society, or corporation that is
5 exempt from taxation under § 501(c)(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

6 (d) (1) "Mental health professional" means an individual who provides mental
7 health services in public schools and is employed by:

8 (i) A county school system; or

9 (ii) A local health department to provide school health services
10 through an agreement with a county board.

11 (2) "Mental health professional" includes a school psychologist, resource
12 psychologist, psychologist coordinator, social worker, social worker supervisor, school
13 counselor, or mental health coordinator.

14 (e) "Program" means the Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program.

15 **(F) "PUBLIC SCHOOL NURSE" MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO:**

16 **(1) IS LICENSED AS A REGISTERED NURSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH**
17 **TITLE 8 OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE;**

18 **(2) PROVIDES HEALTH SERVICES IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL; AND**

19 **(3) IS EMPLOYED BY:**

20 **(I) A COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM; OR**

21 **(II) A LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE SCHOOL**
22 **HEALTH SERVICES THROUGH AN AGREEMENT WITH A COUNTY BOARD.**

23 18–1502.

24 (a) There is a program of loan assistance repayment known as the Janet L.
25 Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program in the State.

26 (b) The Office of Student Financial Assistance shall assist in the repayment of
27 the amount of any higher education loan owed by an individual who:

28 (1) (i) Receives a graduate, professional, or undergraduate degree from:

- 1 1. A college or university in the State of Maryland;
- 2 2. A school of law; or
- 3 3. For a mental health professional, any accredited college or

4 university; or

5 (ii) Receives a Resident Teacher Certificate (RTC) from the
6 Department after completing an alternative teaching preparation program approved by the
7 State Superintendent;

8 (2) Obtains eligible employment;

9 (3) Receives an income that is less than the maximum eligible total income
10 levels established by the Office, including any additional sources of income; and

11 (4) Satisfies any other criteria established by the Office.

12 (c) Subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, the Office shall assist
13 in the repayment of the amount of any higher education loan owed by a:

14 (1) Public school teacher in the State who:

15 (i) Has taught in Maryland for at least 2 years:

16 1. In science, technology, engineering, fine arts, or math
17 subjects;

18 2. In a school in which at least the following percentages of
19 the students are enrolled in the free and reduced price lunch program in the State:

20 A. 75% through June 30, 2025; and

21 B. 55% beginning July 1, 2025; or

22 3. In a school that:

23 A. Had Title I status during the 2018–2019 school year;

24 B. Lost Title I status after the 2018–2019 school year; and

25 C. Participates in the United States Department of
26 Agriculture Community Eligibility Provision; and

27 (ii) Has received a performance evaluation rating for the most recent
28 year available in the county in which the teacher taught; [or]

1 (2) Mental health professional who has provided mental health services in
2 a public school for at least 2 years as an employee of:

3 (i) A county school system; or

4 (ii) A local health department through an agreement with a county
5 board; **OR**

6 **(3) NURSE WHO HAS BEEN A PUBLIC SCHOOL NURSE FOR AT LEAST 2**
7 **YEARS.**

8 (d) (1) A grant awarded under subsection (c) of this section shall be known as
9 the Nancy Grasmick Public School Professional Award.

10 (2) A recipient of a Nancy Grasmick Public School Professional Award shall
11 be known as a Nancy Grasmick Public School Professional Scholar.

12 (e) An applicant for assistance in the repayment of a commercial loan shall
13 demonstrate to the Office that the commercial loan was used for tuition, educational
14 expenses, or living expenses for graduate or undergraduate study.

15 (f) Assistance in the repayment of a loan from an entity set forth in §
16 18–1501(c)(2) of this subtitle shall require the approval of the Office.

17 (g) Subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, the Office shall assist
18 in the repayment of the amount of any higher education loan owed by a licensed clinical
19 alcohol and drug counselor, a licensed clinical marriage and family therapy counselor, or a
20 licensed clinical professional counselor whose practice is located in a high–need geographic
21 area of the State as determined by the Maryland Department of Health.

22 18–1503.

23 (a) The Office of Student Financial Assistance shall adopt regulations to
24 establish:

25 (1) The maximum starting income for eligibility in the Janet L. Hoffman
26 Loan Assistance Repayment Program;

27 (2) The maximum total income for eligibility in the Janet L. Hoffman Loan
28 Assistance Repayment Program, including any additional sources of income;

29 (3) That priority for participation in the Program shall be given to an
30 individual who:

31 (i) Graduated from an institution of higher education in the last 3
32 years;

1 (ii) Is a resident of the State;

2 (iii) Is employed on a full-time basis; and

3 (iv) 1. Provides, as the principal part of the individual's
4 employment, legal services to low-income residents in the State who cannot afford legal
5 services, nursing services in nursing shortage areas in the State as defined in § 18-802 of
6 this title, or other services in an eligible field of employment in which there is a shortage of
7 qualified practitioners to low-income or underserved residents or areas of the State; or

8 2. For teacher [and], mental health professional, **AND**
9 **PUBLIC SCHOOL NURSE** applicants only, qualifies for a Nancy Grasmick Public School
10 Professional Award;

11 (4) A limit on the total amount of assistance provided by the Office of
12 Student Financial Assistance in repaying the loan of an eligible individual, based on the
13 individual's total income and outstanding higher education loan balance;

14 (5) A procedure and schedule for the monthly or annual payment of the
15 amount of loan assistance provided by the Office of Student Financial Assistance to the
16 eligible individual, as appropriate to assist an eligible individual in meeting loan
17 forgiveness program requirements;

18 (6) A requirement that an eligible individual apply to federal loan
19 forgiveness programs for which the individual may qualify;

20 (7) A requirement that an eligible individual notify the Office of Student
21 Financial Assistance if the individual receives other loan repayment assistance; and

22 (8) An annual review of the eligibility of each individual participating in
23 the Program.

24 (b) The Office of Student Financial Assistance shall adopt any other regulations
25 necessary to implement this subtitle.

26 18-1506.

27 The Office shall publicize the availability of the Program, including by publicizing
28 the Program:

29 (1) At historically Black colleges and universities;

30 (2) In a manner that focuses on students who are historically
31 underrepresented in the teaching field; [and]

32 (3) To eligible mental health professionals in an effort to recruit and retain
33 mental health professionals to public schools in the State; **AND**

1 **(4) TO ELIGIBLE PUBLIC SCHOOL NURSES IN AN EFFORT TO RECRUIT**
2 **AND RETAIN NURSES WORKING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE STATE.**

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
4 1, 2024.