

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3637

To amend title VII of the Public Health Service Act to authorize assistance for increasing workforce diversity in the professions of physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, and speech-language pathology, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 9, 2019

Mr. RUSH (for himself and Mrs. RODGERS of Washington) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To amend title VII of the Public Health Service Act to authorize assistance for increasing workforce diversity in the professions of physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, and speech-language pathology, and for other purposes.

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 “Allied Health Work-  
5 force Diversity Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. INCREASING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY IN THE PRO-**  
2 **FESSIONS OF PHYSICAL THERAPY, OCCUPA-**  
3 **TIONAL THERAPY, AUDIOLOGY, AND SPEECH-**  
4 **LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY.**

5 Title VII of the Public Health Service Act is amend-  
6 ed—

7 (1) by redesignating part G (42 U.S.C. 295j et  
8 seq.) as part H; and

9 (2) by inserting after part F (42 U.S.C. 294n  
10 et seq.) the following new part:

11 **“PART G—INCREASING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY**  
12 **IN THE PROFESSIONS OF PHYSICAL THER-**  
13 **APY, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, AUDIOLOGY,**  
14 **AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY**

15 **“SEC. 783. SCHOLARSHIPS AND STIPENDS.**

16 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants  
17 and contracts to eligible entities to increase educational  
18 opportunities in the professions of physical therapy, occu-  
19 pational therapy, audiology, and speech-language pathol-  
20 ogy for eligible individuals by—

21 “(1) providing student scholarships or stipends,  
22 including for—

23 “(A) completion of an accelerated degree  
24 program;

1           “(B) completion of an associate’s, bach-  
2           elor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree program;  
3           and

4           “(C) entry by a diploma or associate’s de-  
5           gree practitioner into a bridge or degree com-  
6           pletion program;

7           “(2) providing assistance for completion of pre-  
8           requisite courses or other preparation necessary for  
9           acceptance for enrollment in the eligible entity; and

10          “(3) carrying out activities to increase the re-  
11          tention of students in one or more programs in the  
12          professions of physical therapy, occupational ther-  
13          apy, audiology, and speech-language pathology.

14          “(b) CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—In  
15          carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall take into  
16          consideration the recommendations of national organiza-  
17          tions representing the professions of physical therapy, oc-  
18          cupational therapy, audiology, and speech-language pa-  
19          thology, including the American Physical Therapy Asso-  
20          ciation, the American Occupational Therapy Association,  
21          the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the  
22          American Academy of Audiology, and the Academy of  
23          Doctors of Audiology.

24          “(c) REQUIRED INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS FOR  
25          AWARD RECIPIENTS.—

1           “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may require  
2 recipients of awards under this section to report to  
3 the Secretary concerning the annual admission, re-  
4 tention, and graduation rates for eligible individuals  
5 in programs of the recipient leading to a degree in  
6 any of the professions of physical therapy, occupa-  
7 tional therapy, audiology, and speech-language pa-  
8 thology.

9           “(2) FALLING RATES.—If any of the rates re-  
10 ported by a recipient under paragraph (1) fall below  
11 the average for such recipient over the two years  
12 preceding the year covered by the report, the recipi-  
13 ent shall provide the Secretary with plans for imme-  
14 diately improving such rates.

15           “(3) INELIGIBILITY.—A recipient described in  
16 paragraph (2) shall be ineligible for continued fund-  
17 ing under this section if the plan of the recipient  
18 fails to improve the rates within the 1-year period  
19 beginning on the date such plan is implemented.

20           “(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

21           “(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—The term ‘eligible  
22 entity’ means an education program that—

23                   “(A) is accredited by—

24                           “(i) the Council on Academic Accredi-  
25 tation in Audiology and Speech-Language

1 Pathology or the Accreditation Commission  
2 for Audiology Education;

3 “(ii) the Commission on Accreditation  
4 in Physical Therapy Education; or

5 “(iii) the Accreditation Council for  
6 Occupational Therapy Education; and

7 “(B) is carrying out a program for recruit-  
8 ing and retaining students underrepresented in  
9 the professions of physical therapy, occupa-  
10 tional therapy, audiology, and speech-language  
11 pathology (including racial or ethnic minorities,  
12 or students from disadvantaged backgrounds).

13 “(2) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term ‘eligible  
14 individual’ means an individual who—

15 “(A) is a member of a class of persons who  
16 are underrepresented in the professions of phys-  
17 ical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology,  
18 and speech-language pathology (including indi-  
19 viduals who are racial or ethnic minorities, or  
20 are from disadvantaged backgrounds);

21 “(B) has a financial need for a scholarship  
22 or stipend; and

23 “(C) is enrolled (or accepted for enroll-  
24 ment) at an audiology, speech-language pathol-  
25 ogy, physical therapy, or occupational therapy

1           program as a full-time student at an eligible en-  
2           tity.

3           “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
4 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
5 \$5,000,000 for the first fiscal year commencing after the  
6 date of enactment of the Allied Health Workforce Diver-  
7 sity Act of 2019 and each of the 4 succeeding fiscal  
8 years.”.

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