

SENATE BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_ HOUSE BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_

1 A BILL to amend and reenact § 32.1-122.8 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia  
2 by adding a section numbered 32.1-122.6:2, relating to loan repayment programs; mental health  
3 professionals.

4 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

5 **1. That § 32.1-122.8 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of**  
6 **Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 32.1-122.6:2 as follows:**

7 **§ 32.1-122.6:2. Mental Health Professional Loan Repayment Program.**

8 A. With such funds as are appropriated for this purpose, the Board shall establish the Mental  
9 Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (the Program) for any of the following mental health  
10 professionals who meet criteria determined by the Board:

- 11 1. Mental health professionals as defined in § 54.1-2400.1;
- 12 2. Licensed clinical social workers;
- 13 3. Licensed clinical mental health counselors;
- 14 4. Licensed marriage and family therapists;
- 15 5. Psychiatric nurse specialists;
- 16 6. Health service psychologists (both clinical and counseling);
- 17 7. Physician assistants in mental and behavioral health
- 18 8. Psychiatric and mental health nurse practitioners;
- 19 9. Psychiatrists;
- 20 10. Licensed clinical addiction specialists;
- 21 11. Licensed psychological associates; and
- 22 12. College students and prospective college students pursuing a career in any of the  
23 forementioned occupations.

24 The Commissioner shall act as the fiscal agent for the Board in administration of these funds.

25 Prior to awarding any funds, the Board shall require the recipient to agree to provide mental health  
26 services for no less than three years in a medically underserved area of the Commonwealth as defined in  
27 § 32.1-122.5.

28 B. The Board shall promulgate regulations for the implementation and administration of the  
29 Program. Any mental health professional may apply to participate.

30 C. Any recipient of loan repayment funds who fails to honor the obligation in subsection A shall  
31 be required to pay back any loan repayment funds they received. Any repaid funds, and any interest  
32 thereon, shall be used only for the purposes of this section and shall not revert to the general fund.

33 **§ 32.1-122.8. Board's authority to receive and expend funds.**

34 The Board of Health is hereby authorized to apply for, receive, and expend federal and any other  
35 available funds for the enhancement of the primary health care system, including, but not limited to, any  
36 funds designated for any physician loan repayment program or mental health professional loan  
37 repayment program, for medical scholarships, and for area health education centers.

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