

113TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 702

To amend the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a Frontline Providers Loan Repayment Program.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 14, 2013

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a Frontline Providers Loan Repayment Program.

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 “Access to Frontline  
5 Health Care Act of 2013”.

6 **SEC. 2. FRONTLINE PROVIDERS LOAN REPAYMENT PRO-**  
7 **GRAM.**

8 Part D of title III of the Public Health Service Act  
9 (42 U.S.C. 254b et seq.) is amended—

1           (1) by redesignating the second subpart XI (as  
2           added by section 10333 of Public Law 111–148) as  
3           subpart XII;

4           (2) by redesignating the second section 340H  
5           (as added by such section 10333) as section 340I;  
6           and

7           (3) by adding at the end the following:

8           **“Subpart XIII—Frontline Health Care Services**

9           **“SEC. 340J. FRONTLINE PROVIDERS LOAN REPAYMENT**  
10           **PROGRAM.**

11           “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish  
12           and carry out a Frontline Providers Loan Repayment Pro-  
13           gram (in this section referred to as the ‘Loan Repayment  
14           Program’) under which, pursuant to contracts in accord-  
15           ance with this section—

16           “(1) the Secretary agrees to make student loan  
17           repayments; and

18           “(2) the individual agrees to serve as a health  
19           professional for a period of full-time service of not  
20           less than 2 years at a health care facility serving a  
21           frontline care scarcity area.

22           “(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to participate in  
23           the Loan Repayment Program, an individual must—

1           “(1) submit an application to participate in the  
2           Loan Repayment Program in such form and manner  
3           and at such time as specified by the Secretary; and

4           “(2) sign and submit to the Secretary, at the  
5           time of submittal of such application, a written con-  
6           tract (described in subsection (d)).

7           “(c) PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM.—

8           “(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual becomes a  
9           participant in the Loan Repayment Program only  
10          upon the approval of the Secretary of the individ-  
11          ual’s application submitted under subsection (b)(1)  
12          and the Secretary’s acceptance of the contract sub-  
13          mitted by the individual under subsection (b)(2).

14          “(2) PREFERENCE.—In awarding contracts  
15          under this section, the Secretary shall give pref-  
16          erence to applicants who have undertaken training  
17          or coursework in interdisciplinary studies.

18          “(3) RECRUITMENT FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY  
19          PROGRAMS.—The Secretary shall—

20                 “(A) determine the frontline care scarcity  
21                 areas in which to place contract recipients  
22                 under this section; and

23                 “(B) in making such determination, give  
24                 preference to areas with a demonstrated pro-  
25                 gram of interdisciplinary health care, or with

1           demonstrated plans to initiate interdisciplinary  
2           approaches to community health care.

3           “(4) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall provide  
4           written notice to an individual promptly upon the  
5           Secretary’s approving, under paragraph (1), of the  
6           individual’s participation in the Loan Repayment  
7           Program.

8           “(d) CONTRACT.—The contract described in this sub-  
9           section is a written contract between the Secretary and  
10          an individual that contains—

11           “(1) an agreement that—

12                   “(A) the Secretary agrees to provide the  
13                   individual with student loan repayment (de-  
14                   scribed in subsection (e)) for a period of time  
15                   as determined by the Secretary, to pay off debts  
16                   incurred during the course of the study or pro-  
17                   gram described in subsection (g)(2)(B); and

18                   “(B) the individual agrees—

19                           “(i) to accept provision of such a stu-  
20                           dent loan repayment to the individual; and

21                           “(ii) to provide frontline care services  
22                           for a period of full-time service of not less  
23                           than 2 years at a health care facility serv-  
24                           ing a frontline care scarcity area;

1           “(2) a provision that any financial obligation of  
2 the United States arising out of a contract entered  
3 into under this section and any obligation of the in-  
4 dividual which is conditioned thereon, is contingent  
5 upon funds being appropriated for student loan re-  
6 payment under this section;

7           “(3) a statement of the damages to which the  
8 United States is entitled, under subsection (f), for  
9 the individual’s breach of the contract; and

10           “(4) such other statements as the Secretary  
11 deems appropriate of the rights and liabilities of the  
12 Secretary and of the individual, not inconsistent  
13 with the provisions of this section.

14           “(e) STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT.—

15           “(1) AMOUNT.—The amount of an annual stu-  
16 dent loan repayment under this section on behalf of  
17 an individual shall be determined by the Secretary,  
18 and shall take into consideration the need to pay a  
19 sufficient amount to enable recruiting of health care  
20 providers into the loan repayment program under  
21 this section.

22           “(2) PAYMENTS DIRECTLY TO LOAN PRO-  
23 VIDER.—The Secretary may contract with an indi-  
24 vidual’s loan provider, for the payment to the loan  
25 provider, on behalf of the individual, of the amounts

1 of a student loan repayment described in paragraph  
2 (1).

3 “(f) BREACH OF CONTRACT.—If an individual  
4 breaches a written contract under this section by failing  
5 to begin such individual’s service obligation, or to complete  
6 such service obligation, the United States shall be entitled  
7 to recover from the individual an amount that is equal  
8 to the sum of—

9 “(1) the total amount which has been paid to  
10 the individual, or on behalf of the individual, under  
11 the contract; and

12 “(2) any amount of interest, as determined by  
13 the Secretary.

14 “(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

15 “(1) The term ‘frontline care scarcity area’  
16 means an area, population group, or facility that—

17 “(A) is designated as a health professional  
18 shortage area under section 332; or

19 “(B) is designated by the State in which  
20 the area is located as having a shortage of  
21 frontline care services.

22 “(2) The term ‘frontline care services’ means  
23 health care services—

24 “(A) in the field of general surgery, optom-  
25 etry, ophthalmology, chiropractic, physical ther-

1           apy, audiology, speech language pathology,  
2           pharmacies, public health, podiatric medicine,  
3           dietetics, occupational therapy, general pedi-  
4           rics, respiratory therapy, medical technology,  
5           otolaryngology, or radiologic technology; and

6                   “(B) provided by a general surgeon, op-  
7           tometrist, ophthalmologist, chiropractor, phys-  
8           ical therapist, audiologist, speech language pa-  
9           thologist, pharmacist, public health profes-  
10          sional, podiatric physician, registered dietician,  
11          occupational therapist, pediatrician, respiratory  
12          therapist, medical technologist, otolaryngologist,  
13          or radiologic technologist who has completed an  
14          appropriate course of study or program, offered  
15          by an accredited institution of higher education  
16          in the United States.

17          “(h) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall begin  
18          implementation of the loan repayment program under this  
19          section within 180 days of the date of the enactment of  
20          this section.”.

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