

HOUSE BILL No. 6137

June 7, 2018, Introduced by Reps. Chang and Rendon and referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

A bill to establish a licensed social workers student loan repayment program for certain social workers serving in areas of need; and to prescribe certain powers and duties of certain state officers, agencies, and departments.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "licensed social workers student loan repayment act".

3 Sec. 2. As used in this act:

4 (a) "Critical human service area" means a geographical area in
5 this state that meets the criteria provided for in 42 CFR Part 5,
6 Appendix C, for designation as a geographical area that has a
7 shortage of mental health professionals.

1 (b) "Critical human service field" means a field of social
2 work, including, but not limited to, social work in schools,
3 substance abuse programs, correctional facilities and criminal
4 justice programs, mental health facilities and programs, physical
5 and sexual violence programs, aging programs, HIV/AIDS programs,
6 veterans services, and child welfare services, in which there is a
7 critical need for licensed social workers as determined by the
8 department with the advice of the Michigan board of social work
9 created in section 18505 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368,
10 MCL 333.18505, or another recognized organization of social work
11 professionals.

12 (c) "Department" means the department of health and human
13 services or its designee.

14 (d) "Eligible debt" means the remaining balance of all loans
15 that meet both of the following conditions:

16 (i) Were obtained by an individual to pay qualified
17 educational expenses at a postsecondary educational institution for
18 a course of study leading to a degree necessary to become a
19 licensed social worker.

20 (ii) Are insured, reinsured, subsidized, guaranteed, or made
21 by this state, an agency of this state, the United States, or an
22 agency of the United States.

23 (e) "Full-time" means at least 30 hours per week.

24 (f) "Licensed social worker" means an individual licensed
25 under article 15 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL
26 333.16101 to 333.18838, to engage in the practice of social work at
27 the bachelor's or master's level.

1 (g) "Low income" means income at or below 250% of the federal
2 poverty guidelines published annually in the federal register by
3 the United States Department of Health and Human Services under its
4 authority to revise the poverty line under 42 USC 9902.

5 (h) "Postsecondary educational institution" means a degree- or
6 certificate-granting public or private college or university,
7 junior college, or community college that is located in this state.

8 (i) "Qualified educational expenses" means tuition and fees
9 required for the enrollment or attendance of a student at a
10 postsecondary educational institution and expenses for fees, books,
11 supplies, and equipment required for courses of instruction at that
12 postsecondary educational institution.

13 Sec. 3. The licensed social workers student loan repayment
14 program is created, to be administered by the department. The
15 department shall do all of the following:

16 (a) Award grants to eligible individuals pursuant to this act.

17 (b) Develop application forms and procedures for individuals
18 applying for grants under this act. These forms and procedures must
19 ensure that an individual separately apply each year for which he
20 or she seeks a grant.

21 (c) Publicize the licensed social workers student loan
22 repayment program.

23 (d) Promulgate rules to implement this act pursuant to the
24 administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to
25 24.328.

26 Sec. 4. The department may award a grant under this act to an
27 individual determined by the department to meet all of the

1 following eligibility criteria:

2 (a) Is a licensed social worker in good standing.

3 (b) Is a United States citizen or permanent resident of the
4 United States.

5 (c) Has resided continuously in this state for the 12 months
6 immediately preceding the date of his or her application for a
7 grant under this act and is not a resident of any other state.

8 (d) Has eligible debt.

9 (e) Meets at least 2 of the following:

10 (i) Has worked full-time in a critical human service area
11 during the year immediately preceding the date of his or her
12 application for a grant under this act.

13 (ii) Has worked full-time in a critical human service field
14 during the year immediately preceding the date of his or her
15 application for a grant under this act.

16 (iii) Has received low income performing the work described in
17 subparagraph (i) or (ii).

18 Sec. 5. (1) An individual eligible under section 4 shall be
19 awarded all of the following grants for which he or she qualifies:

20 (a) An individual who completes 1 year of continuous full-time
21 employment in a critical human service area or a critical human
22 service field shall receive a grant in an amount equal to the
23 remaining principal balance of his or her eligible debt at the time
24 of the grant application or \$15,000.00, whichever is less.

25 (b) An individual who completes more than 1 year of continuous
26 full-time employment in a critical human service area or a critical
27 human service field shall receive a grant in an amount equal to 1

1 of the following:

2 (i) For a completed second year, the remaining principal
3 balance of his or her eligible debt at the time of the grant
4 application or \$15,000.00, whichever is less.

5 (ii) For less than a completed second year, a portion of the
6 amount described in subparagraph (i), prorated based on the number
7 of months of continuous full-time employment in a critical human
8 service area or a critical human service field.

9 (c) An individual who completes more than 2 years of
10 continuous full-time employment in a critical human service area or
11 a critical human service field shall receive a grant in an amount
12 equal to 1 of the following:

13 (i) For a completed third year, the remaining principal
14 balance of his or her eligible debt at the time of the grant
15 application or \$15,000.00, whichever is less.

16 (ii) For less than a completed third year, a portion of the
17 amount described in subparagraph (i), prorated based on the number
18 of months of continuous full-time employment in a critical human
19 service area or a critical human service field.

20 (d) An individual who completes more than 3 years of
21 continuous full-time employment in a critical human service area or
22 a critical human service field shall receive a grant in an amount
23 equal to 1 of the following:

24 (i) For a completed fourth year, the remaining principal
25 balance of his or her eligible debt at the time of the grant
26 application or \$15,000.00, whichever is less.

27 (ii) For less than a completed fourth year, a portion of the

1 amount described in subparagraph (i), prorated based on the number
2 of months of continuous full-time employment in a critical human
3 service area or a critical human service field.

4 (2) A grant under subsection (1) shall be reduced by an amount
5 equal to the amount the individual is entitled to receive from any
6 state or federal loan repayment program for which he or she is
7 qualified at the time of the grant application.

8 (3) A grant under subsection (1) shall be paid by the
9 department directly to the eligible grant applicant, to be applied
10 by that individual to his or her eligible debt.

11 (4) If there are insufficient funds to award full grants to
12 all qualifying applicants under subsection (1), grants shall first
13 be paid to those applicants who meet all 3 requirements set forth
14 in section 4(e) (i) to (iii), prorated among them if necessary. If
15 funds are sufficient to award full grants to those applicants who
16 meet all 3 requirements set forth in section 4(e) (i) to (iii),
17 remaining funds, if any, shall be used to award grants to remaining
18 qualifying applicants under subsection (1), prorated among them if
19 necessary.

20 Sec. 6. Money required to implement the licensed social
21 workers student loan repayment program created under this act shall
22 be appropriated from the licensed social workers student loan
23 repayment fund created in section 3 of the licensed social workers
24 student loan repayment fund act and any other source the
25 legislature considers necessary to implement this act.

26 Enacting section 1. This act does not take effect unless
27 Senate Bill No. _____ or House Bill No. 6138 (request no. 06601'18) of

1 the 99th Legislature is enacted into law.