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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To ensure a robust workforce at health centers reflective of the patients and communities served by such centers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. RUIZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To ensure a robust workforce at health centers reflective of the patients and communities served by such centers, 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 “Developing the Com-
5 munity Health Workforce Act of 2024”.

1 **SEC. 2. IMPROVING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF**
2 **FEDERAL QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER**
3 **STAFF.**

4 (a) PRIORITY TO FQHCs AND RURAL HEALTH CLIN-
5 ics.—Section 333(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42
6 U.S.C. 254f(a)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
7 lowing:

8 “(4) In approving applications for assignment of
9 members of the Corps, the Secretary shall, notwith-
10 standing paragraph (3), give priority to applications with
11 respect to health professional shortage areas that are Fed-
12 erally qualified health centers and rural health clinics, as
13 defined in section 1861(aa) of the Social Security Act.”.

14 (b) LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
16 Human Services shall award grants to Federally
17 qualified health centers (as defined in section
18 1861(aa) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
19 1395x(aa)) for the purpose of addressing health pro-
20 fessional workforce shortages by making loan repay-
21 ments on behalf of health care professionals serving
22 at such centers.

23 (2) APPLICATIONS.—To seek a grant under
24 paragraph (1), a Federally qualified health center
25 shall submit an application to the Secretary of
26 Health and Human Services at such time, in such

1 manner, and containing such information as the Sec-
2 retary may require. At a minimum, such an applica-
3 tion shall include—

4 (A) a description of the center's capacity
5 to address specific regional workforce shortages,
6 supported by data;

7 (B) a plan for making loan repayments as
8 described in paragraph (1); and

9 (C) a description of the center's use of an
10 interdisciplinary approach to care (such as
11 through the use of teams to provide care that
12 include physicians, nurses, social workers, com-
13 munity health workers, pharmacists, and other
14 health care professionals).

15 **SEC. 3. COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER WORKFORCE PIPE-**
16 **LINE PROGRAM.**

17 (a) GRANTS TO RECRUIT AND HIRE CULTURALLY-
18 COMPETENT STAFF.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 330 of the Public
20 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b) is amended—

21 (A) by redesignating subsection (r) as sub-
22 section (u); and

23 (B) by inserting after subsection (q) the
24 following new subsection:

1 “(r) RECRUITING AND HIRING CULTURALLY-COM-
2 PETENT STAFF.—The Secretary may award grants to
3 health centers for the purpose of assisting such centers
4 in—

5 “(1) recruiting and hiring staff from within the
6 communities served by such centers; and

7 “(2) helping such staff to advance in the career
8 ladder.”.

9 (b) FQHCS DEEMED ELIGIBLE TO REGISTER AS AP-
10 PRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after
11 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
12 Labor shall revise the regulations under part 29 of title
13 29, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date
14 of the enactment of this Act, so that Federally qualified
15 health centers (as defined in section 1861(aa) of the Social
16 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(aa))) are eligible to reg-
17 ister as apprenticeship programs under such part.

18 (c) HEALTH CENTERS CAREER OPPORTUNITIES.—
19 Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.
20 254b) is further amended by inserting after subsection (r),
21 as inserted by subsection (a) of this section, the following:

22 “(s) HEALTH CENTERS CAREER OPPORTUNITIES.—
23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award
24 grants to institutions of higher education, including
25 community colleges and minority-serving institu-

1 tions, to establish partnerships with one or more
2 health centers funded under this section for training
3 students in health professions.

4 “(2) USE OF FUNDS.—

5 “(A) COSTS.—An institution of higher
6 education receiving a grant under this sub-
7 section may use the grant to pay the costs of
8 training, including the salary of the clinicians
9 or other educators who provide the training.

10 “(B) TRAINING SUPPORTED.—The train-
11 ing supported pursuant to a grant under this
12 subsection may include formal training and
13 mentorships.

14 “(C) TYPES OF TRAINING .—The types of
15 training supported pursuant to a grant under
16 this subsection may include clinical, information
17 technology, operations, finance, or other train-
18 ing for students of health professions, as deter-
19 mined by the institution of higher education re-
20 ceiving the grant in partnership with the health
21 center involved.

22 “(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

23 “(A) The term ‘institution of higher edu-
24 cation’ means an institution of higher education

1 described in subsection (a) or (b) of section 101
2 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

3 “(B) The term ‘minority-serving institu-
4 tion’ means an institution of higher education
5 described in section 371(a) of the Higher Edu-
6 cation Act of 1965.”.

7 (d) BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS.—Section
8 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b)
9 is further amended by inserting after subsection (s), as
10 inserted by subsection (c) of this section, the following:

11 “(t) BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award
13 grants to health centers to establish, operate, or ex-
14 pand training programs for behavioral health spe-
15 cialists.

16 “(2) USE OF FUNDS.—The training programs
17 for behavioral health specialists supported pursuant
18 to a grant under this subsection may include—

19 “(A) stipends for personnel to operate the
20 training programs;

21 “(B) apprenticeship programs; and

22 “(C) other recruitment and retention ac-
23 tivities for behavioral health specialists.”.

1 **SEC. 4. EXPANDING HOSPITAL AND FQHC PARTNERSHIPS**
2 **FOR GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION.**

3 (a) PAYMENTS TO TEACHING HEALTH CENTERS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 340H of the Public
5 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 256h) is amended—

6 (A) in subsection (a)(1), by inserting “, or
7 that have in effect a covered agreement with a
8 sponsoring institution so listed,” after “relevant
9 accrediting body”; and

10 (B) in subsection (j), by adding at the end
11 the following new paragraph:

12 “(5) COVERED AGREEMENT.—The term ‘cov-
13 ered agreement’ means a written contract, memo-
14 randum of understanding, or other written agree-
15 ment entered into for not less than 2 years for the
16 purpose of conducting an approved graduate medical
17 residency training program.”.

18 (2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made
19 by paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to ex-
20 penses incurred on or after October 1, 2025.

21 (b) MEDICARE GME CAP.—Section 1886(h)(4)(H)
22 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(h)(4)(H))
23 is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

24 “(vii) TRAINING PROGRAMS AT FED-
25 ERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS.—
26 For cost reporting periods beginning on or

1 after October 1, 2025, the Secretary shall,
2 consistent with the principles of subpara-
3 graphs (F) and (G) and subject to para-
4 graphs (7), (8), (9), and (10), prescribe
5 rules for the application of such subpara-
6 graphs in the case of a hospital that has
7 an approved medical residency training
8 program where a significant portion of
9 such program (as defined by the Secretary)
10 occurs at a Federally qualified health cen-
11 ter, including by adjusting the limitation
12 under subparagraph (F) with respect to
13 such a hospital.”.

14 **SEC. 5. EXPANDING FQHC SERVICES.**

15 (a) BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL AND CASE
16 MANAGER SERVICES.—

17 (1) MEDICARE.—Section 1861(aa) of the Social
18 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(aa)) is amended—

19 (A) in paragraph (1)—

20 (i) in subparagraph (B), by inserting
21 “such services furnished on or after Octo-
22 ber 1, 2025, by a behavioral health con-
23 sultant, peer support specialist, or other
24 behavioral health professional (as such

1 terms are defined by the Secretary),” be-
2 fore “and such services”;

3 (ii) in subparagraph (C), by striking
4 “and” at the end;

5 (iii) in subparagraph (D), by striking
6 the comma at the end and inserting “,
7 and”;

8 (iv) by inserting after subparagraph
9 (D) the following new subparagraph:

10 “(E) case management services furnished on or
11 after October 1, 2025, by a case manager (as de-
12 fined by the Secretary),”; and

13 (B) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking “(D)”
14 and inserting “(E)”.

15 (2) MEDICAID.—Section 1905(l)(2)(A) of the
16 Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(A)) is
17 amended by inserting “and (E)” before “of section”.

18 (b) GUIDANCE ON STATE MEDICAID PAYMENTS TO
19 FQHCs.—Section 1902(bb) of the Social Security Act (42
20 U.S.C. 1396a(bb)) is amended by adding at the end the
21 following new paragraph:

22 “(7) STUDY AND GUIDANCE ON PAYMENT AD-
23 JUSTMENTS.—Not later than October 1, 2025, and
24 not less frequently than annually thereafter, the Sec-
25 retary shall—

1 “(A) conduct a study on any differences in
2 the methods by which State plans adjust the
3 payment amount under paragraph (3) for serv-
4 ices furnished during a fiscal year; and

5 “(B) based on the results of the study con-
6 ducted under subparagraph (A), issue guidance
7 to State plans on best practices for adjusting
8 the payment amount under paragraph (3) for
9 services furnished during a fiscal year.”.