

SB 310

1 THE STATE SENATE  
2 Tuesday, February 17, 2009

3 Senate Bill No. 310  
4 As Amended

5 SENATE BILL NO. 310 - By: Paddock of the Senate and Cox of the  
6 House.

7 [ schools - Oklahoma Health Care Workers and Educators  
8 Assistance Program - effective date -  
9 emergency ]

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

11 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 5, Chapter 387, O.S.L.  
12 2008 (70 O.S. Supp. 2008, Section 2640), is amended to read as  
13 follows:

14 Section 2640. A. There is hereby established the Oklahoma  
15 Health Care Workers and Educators Assistance Program. The purpose  
16 of the program shall be to encourage persons to enter nursing and  
17 allied health careers within this state. Priority in awarding  
18 assistance is intended to go toward those career fields in which  
19 there is an urgent need for qualified employees to provide health  
20 care services or in career fields in which a shortage of qualified  
21 employees is projected to exist in the future.

22 B. Only students who are residents of this state shall be  
23 eligible to participate in the Oklahoma Health Care Workers and  
24 Educators Assistance Program.

1 C. Only students of accredited or recognized health care  
2 programs or colleges and universities shall be eligible for awards  
3 from the Oklahoma Health Care Workers and Educators Assistance  
4 Program.

5 D. The Oklahoma Health Care Workers and Educators Assistance  
6 Program shall be administered by the Health Care Workforce Resources  
7 Board. The Board is authorized to enter into an agreement with the  
8 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education for fiscal services as  
9 may be necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

10 E. The Health Care Workforce Resources Board shall implement  
11 the provisions of this section in the most balanced, efficient, and  
12 effective means necessary to meet the following priorities:

13 1. Create additional nursing or allied health faculty by  
14 providing scholarships to cover individuals' costs of gaining the  
15 advanced degrees necessary to serve as faculty members in nursing  
16 and allied health education programs;

17 2. Expand and modernize learning environments by providing  
18 matching grants to nursing and allied health education institutions  
19 to increase the number of clinical opportunities, and to better  
20 utilize online and distance learning, simulations, and other  
21 innovative methods to provide education and training; and

22 3. Attract more students in nursing and allied health careers  
23 by providing scholarships to cover individuals' costs of gaining

1 degrees or certifications necessary to prepare them for nursing and  
2 allied health occupations.

3 F. The Board shall make an annual public declaration of which  
4 nursing and allied health care education fields have been identified  
5 for priority funding due to either an urgent need for qualified  
6 employees or due to a determination of a future shortage of  
7 qualified employees.

8 G. ~~Implementation of the provisions of this section shall be~~  
9 Scholarships established through the Oklahoma Health Care Workers  
10 and Educators Assistance Program may be awarded contingent on funds  
11 made available through the State Regents for Higher Education.

12 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2009.

13 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation  
14 of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby  
15 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and  
16 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

17 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, dated 2-11-09 - DO  
18 PASS, As Amended and Coauthored.