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SENATE BILL 5010

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators Frockt, Rolfes, Kohl-Welles, Hasegawa, Jayapal, Keiser, and Ranker

Prefiled 12/11/14. Read first time 01/12/15. Referred to Committee on Health Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to the health professional loan repayment and  
2 scholarship program fund; adding a new section to chapter 28B.115  
3 RCW; and making appropriations.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.115  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 The legislature finds that improved access to comprehensive  
8 health care services is vital to achieve health equity and an  
9 increased quality of healthy life for the people of Washington. Many  
10 underserved communities facing financial barriers, including those  
11 related to providers' health education loan debt and disparate  
12 salaries, struggle to attract and retain well-trained health  
13 professionals. Health professional shortage areas also face  
14 additional health care delivery challenges, including patient income  
15 or transportation barriers and lower provider service reimbursements.

16 The health professional loan repayment and scholarship program  
17 fund assists underserved communities in recruiting and retaining  
18 qualified health professionals. The incentive program also encourages  
19 interested and academically prepared health care students and  
20 professionals to consider practice in shortage areas. The legislature  
21 finds that interested students who are encouraged to explore the

1 benefits and unique professional challenges presented in rural health  
2 practice are more likely to establish community roots and remain in  
3 the area in which they are trained. Providing underserved communities  
4 additional resources to recruit qualified health professionals  
5 reinforces the state's commitment to improve access to comprehensive  
6 health care for all persons in Washington.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The sum of four million dollars, or as  
8 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated from the general  
9 fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, for the purposes of  
10 restoring funding to the health professional loan repayment and  
11 scholarship program fund.

12 (2) The sum of four million dollars, or as much thereof as may be  
13 necessary, is appropriated from the general fund for the fiscal year  
14 ending June 30, 2017, for the purposes of restoring funding to the  
15 health professional loan repayment and scholarship program fund.

16 (3) The amounts appropriated in this section shall be deposited  
17 into the health professional loan repayment and scholarship program  
18 fund.

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