

2024 -- H 8078 AS AMENDED

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LC005686
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- THE LADDERS TO
LICENSURE PROGRAM

Introduced By: Representatives Tanzi, Fogarty, Felix, Shallcross Smith, Ajello, J.
Lombardi, Hull, Ackerman, McNamara, and Kislak

Date Introduced: March 15, 2024

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 42 of the General Laws entitled "STATE AFFAIRS AND
2 GOVERNMENT" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 166

4 THE LADDERS TO LICENSURE PROGRAM

5 **42-166-1. The ladders to licensure grant program.**

6 The executive office of health and human services is hereby directed to establish the ladders
7 to licensure grant program, a public-private partnership to:

8 (1) Increase the number of licensed health professionals;

9 (2) Increase racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of health professionals;

10 (3) Provide academic, financial and wrap around supports to enable working adults to
11 obtain health professional higher education degrees and license;

12 (4) Leverage employer support for academic, financial and wraparound supports;

13 (5) Align with existing state workforce and higher education initiatives;

14 (6) Develop and implement career ladders with tiered training and education requirements
15 and corresponding salary increases;

16 (7) Develop and implement interscholastic and interdepartmental agreements that accept
17 prior learning, credentials, work experience, and academic credits towards requirement for higher
18 education health professional degrees;

- 1 (8) Establish policies and initiatives to counter systemic racism and other institutional
2 barriers to participation and advancement of underrepresented populations;
3 (9) Establish policies and initiatives that provide flexible scheduling of work hours and/or
4 academic programs to reduce barriers to participation; and
5 (10) Identify state policy barriers to entry and advancement in the field.

6 **42-166-2. Use of appropriated funds.**

7 Any appropriated funds shall be used to provide grants to three (3) or four (4) grantee
8 partnerships, consisting of multiple private sector health and human services employer
9 organizations and education grantee partnerships (with at least one focused on behavioral health
10 and one focused on nursing). Employers will be required to contribute a twenty-five percent (25%)
11 in-kind match and a ten percent (10%) cash match.

12 **42-166-3. Oversight.**

13 The executive office of health and human services shall collaborate and coordinate with
14 the department of labor and training and the office of the postsecondary commissioner in the
15 development, implementation and oversight of the program.

16 **42-166-4. Reporting.**

17 The executive office of health and human services shall provide quarterly reports to the
18 speaker of the house of representatives and senate president documenting the progress of the
19 implementation of the program.

20 SECTION 2. This act would take effect on July 1, 2024.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- THE LADDERS TO
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1 This act would direct the executive office of health and human services (EOHHS), in
2 conjunction with the department of labor and training (DLT) and the office of the postsecondary
3 commissioner, to implement a grant program to fund public or private partnerships that provide
4 opportunities for healthcare paraprofessionals to pursue higher education degrees and health
5 professional licensure. This program would increase the diversity of the health professional
6 workforce.

7 This act would take effect on July 1, 2024.

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