

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0103

WICHE-repayment program.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) McKim, Connolly, Freeman,
Jaggi and McOmie and Senator(s) Dockstader,
Jennings and Landen

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to the Western Regional Higher Education
2 Compact; imposing a repayment provision on specified
3 students; defining the requirements of the loan or service
4 repayment program; and providing for an effective date.

5

6 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

7

8 **Section 1.** W.S. 21-16-202(b)(ii), (iii) and by
9 creating a new paragraph (iv) are amended to read:

10

11 **21-16-202. When binding; notice of ratification;**
12 **power of governor to appoint commissioners; powers of**
13 **commissioners generally; appropriation of monies.**

14

1 (b) In addition to those powers granted to the
2 commissioners in the compact, the commissioners are
3 directed and empowered:

4
5 (ii) To ratify any contracts entered into by the
6 western interstate commission for higher education or its
7 officers which are deemed to be in the best interest of the
8 state of Wyoming and its qualified students;~~and~~

9
10 (iii) To impose residency requirements on
11 admission to compact programs. Applicants may appeal any
12 admission decisions rendered pursuant to this paragraph
13 directly to the commission;~~and~~ and

14
15 (iv) In the interest of recruiting health care
16 professionals to Wyoming, to impose a repayment program for
17 participating students in dentistry, medicine, podiatry and
18 osteopathic medicine and obtain an agreement from each
19 student admitted as a WICHE program student to a
20 participating institution of higher education for the 2012-
21 2013 academic year and thereafter, whereby the student
22 agrees to:

23

1 (A) Actively engage in full-time
2 professional medical practice in Wyoming for not less than
3 three (3) years as the commission requires. The taking of
4 a medical residency program in the state shall be credited
5 toward the practice requirements at the rate of one-third
6 (1/3) year of full-time practice for each year of service
7 in a medical residency program in the state; or

8
9 (B) Repay all amounts expended by the state
10 of Wyoming on the student's education through the WICHE
11 program, together with interest which shall begin accruing
12 after the student's graduation or residency, whichever is
13 later, but in no event later than eight (8) years after the
14 student enters into an agreement, upon terms specified by
15 the commission. However, interest shall begin to accrue if
16 the commission finds that the student has withdrawn from
17 medical school, school of podiatry, school of osteopathic
18 medicine, dental school or a residency program or is
19 otherwise not making satisfactory progress toward
20 completion of the degree program. Money expended under
21 this paragraph shall accrue at an annual interest rate
22 equal to that charged for federal Stafford loans at the
23 time interest begins to accrue, which rate shall be
24 adjusted annually to equal the federal Stafford loan rate.

1 In no event shall the interest rate be greater than eight
2 percent (8%);

3
4 (C) Upon application of the student, the
5 commission may relieve a student of the obligation to repay
6 amounts expended under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph,
7 in whole or in part, where repayment would cause undue
8 hardship. The commission shall annually report the number
9 of students relieved from repayment under this subparagraph
10 to the joint labor, health and social services interim
11 committee not later than October 1;

12
13 (D) Any amounts paid by medical, podiatry,
14 osteopathic or dental students in accordance with the
15 contractual arrangements authorized under this paragraph
16 shall be credited to a WICHE program repayment account
17 which shall be expended upon appropriation by the
18 legislature;

19
20 (E) The provisions of this paragraph shall
21 not apply to the fields of occupational therapy, physical
22 therapy, optometry, physician assistant or veterinary
23 medicine.

24

1 **Section 2.** This act is effective immediately upon
2 completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law
3 as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming
4 Constitution.

5

6

(END)