

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0179

Medical care for Wyoming communities.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Harshman, Chadwick,
Clouston, O'Hearn, Trujillo and Yin and
Senator(s) Barlow and Hutchings

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to medical care; modifying Wyoming medical
2 education provisions; requiring increased emphasis in
3 higher education medical programs on health care in rural
4 settings in Wyoming; providing for reports and legislative
5 oversight; and providing for an effective date.

6

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

8

9 **Section 1.** W.S. 21-17-109(b), by creating a new
10 subsection (e), by amending and renumbering (e) and (f) as
11 (f) and (g) and by renumbering (g) to (h) is amended to
12 read:

13

1 21-17-109. Course in field of professional health
2 services; authority to offer; contracts with students;
3 repayment of funds expended; deposit of repayments.

4
5 (b) To accomplish the purposes hereof and in order
6 that degrees in such fields of professional health services
7 may be awarded by the university the board of trustees may
8 enter into contracts with other institutions, universities
9 or colleges within or without the state that maintain
10 schools for the training and education of students in
11 professional health services and to expend its funds in
12 connection therewith. Before entering into contracts under
13 this section, the board shall consider assessments of
14 health care needs by geographic area and particular health
15 care priorities identified by the office of rural health
16 under W.S. 9-2-117. The board shall maximize the number of
17 students trained and educated pursuant to this section as
18 the board determines best meets those needs and priorities.
19 The board may institute recruitment programs of highly
20 performing students in all undergraduate disciplines in
21 order to enlarge the pools of eligible students to meet the
22 need identified in this subsection.

23

1 (e) In entering into agreements pursuant to this
2 section, the board of trustees shall recognize the relative
3 need for professional health care services in underserved
4 communities and may prioritize agreements under this
5 section accordingly, including:

6
7 (i) Paying differing portions of the cost of
8 attendance based upon the student's professional practice
9 specialty and location at which the student provides or
10 agrees to provide health care services during the term of
11 an agreement under subsection (d) of this section;

12
13 (ii) Providing different length of practice
14 requirements for agreements under paragraph (d)(ii) of this
15 subsection.

16
17 ~~(e)~~(f) Any amounts, other than fees and tuition
18 payments, paid by medical students in accordance with the
19 contractual arrangements authorized under this section
20 shall be deposited into a special fund designated the
21 Medical School Student Fund, maintained and separately
22 accounted for by the University of Wyoming, which fund may
23 be added to by specific contributions from other sources.

1 The fund may be invested, at the discretion of the
2 president of the University of Wyoming and the dean of the
3 College of Health Sciences, for the production of income.
4 The investment income shall be expended by the University
5 of Wyoming solely for direct assistance for relocation
6 costs associated with practice in Wyoming, contracts
7 providing guaranteed minimum income during professional
8 residency periods, fees and materials for medical board
9 examinations, rural training, dislocation, student
10 development and scholarships to medical students as
11 authorized by the president of the University of Wyoming
12 and the dean of the College of Health Sciences. The
13 principal of the fund established shall remain unimpaired
14 and only the income derived therefrom may be collected and
15 expended from year to year. The amount of income expended
16 annually pursuant to this section shall not exceed an
17 amount equal to four percent (4%) of the previous five (5)
18 year average market value of the fund, calculated from the
19 first day of the fiscal year. Any unexpended income shall
20 remain in the fund. On or before October 1 of each year,
21 the university shall submit a report to the joint
22 appropriations committee and the joint labor, health and
23 social services interim committee on income to the fund and

1 expenditures from fund earnings during the prior fiscal
2 year.

3
4 ~~(f)~~(g) Upon recommendation of the president of the
5 university, the board of trustees may relieve a student of
6 the obligation to repay amounts expended under paragraph
7 (d)(i) of this section, in whole or in part, where
8 repayment would cause undue hardship. In acting upon any
9 recommendation under this subsection, the board shall
10 consider the student's provision of health care services in
11 underserved communities during the term of any agreement
12 under this section, but nothing in this subsection shall be
13 construed as mandating any final decision of the board. The
14 university shall annually report the number of students
15 relieved from repayment under this subsection to the joint
16 labor, health and social services interim committee not
17 later than October 1.

18
19 ~~(g)~~(h) Tuition and fees received by the University of
20 Wyoming from students participating in the medical
21 education program under this section, shall be separately
22 accounted for by the university. These funds are to be
23 used by the university solely for the support of education

1 and training conducted at the university pursuant to this
2 section. The receipt and expenditure of these funds shall
3 be identified in the university's biennial budget request.
4

5 **Section 2.**
6

7 (a) Not later than August 1, 2023, the following
8 reports shall be provided to the joint labor, health and
9 social services interim committee, joint education interim
10 committee and joint appropriations committee:
11

12 (i) The University of Wyoming shall report its
13 plans to modify existing medical education program
14 agreements to best meet the health care needs and
15 priorities referenced in W.S. 21-17-109(b), as amended by
16 this act. No modification of existing medical education
17 program agreements shall be made pursuant to this act until
18 the proposed modification is reported pursuant to this
19 section;
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21 (ii) The University of Wyoming and the Wyoming
22 community college commission shall report the number of
23 students enrolled in Wyoming higher education programs for

1 physicians, physician assistants, nurses and other health
2 care professionals currently supported by state funds,
3 university generated funds and community college funds,
4 whether expended at a Wyoming institution or by a Wyoming
5 institution through agreements with other institutions. The
6 report shall:

7

8 (A) Identify the amount of funds expended
9 for the 2023 and 2024 fiscal years and anticipated to be
10 expended in each fiscal year of the biennium commencing
11 July 1, 2024, for each program by funding source;

12

13 (B) Compare the number of students
14 currently in each health care professional program with a
15 recommended number of students for each program, giving
16 consideration to the rural health office needs and
17 priorities referenced in W.S. 21-17-109(b), as amended by
18 this act;

19

20 (C) Identify further legislative action
21 recommended and a long-term strategic plan to best
22 coordinate existing and potential additional physician and
23 allied health care recruitment and education programs to

1 meet the health care needs and priorities referenced in
2 W.S. 21-17-109(b), as amended by this act. The report shall
3 specifically review and include any recommended changes to
4 the time for repayment of health care profession loan
5 programs or changes to practice requirements;

6

7 (D) Identify potential collaboration
8 agreements with Wyoming hospitals and health care providers
9 which could be used to meet the needs and priorities
10 referenced in W.S. 21-17-109(b), as amended by this act.

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12 (E) Include suggested funding sources,
13 including the need for an appropriation and amounts for
14 potential collaboration agreements identified under
15 subparagraph (D) of this paragraph. The report shall
16 identify the recommended amount for an appropriation and
17 whether an appropriation should be allocated in whole or in
18 part to a permanent endowment fund established pursuant to
19 Wyoming constitution article 15, section 20.

20

21 (iii) The University of Wyoming shall report
22 suggested recommendations regarding the Medical School
23 Student Fund, created by W.S. 21-17-109, which could be

1 made to allow the university to address the rural health
2 office needs and priorities referenced in W.S.
3 21-17-109(b), as amended by this act.

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5 (b) Wyoming community colleges shall cooperate with
6 the Wyoming community college commission in fulfilling the
7 commission's reporting requirements under this act.
8 Recommendations required under this act may be joint
9 recommendations of the University of Wyoming and the
10 commission or may be independent of each other.

11

12 **Section 3.** The joint labor, health and social
13 services interim committee, joint education interim
14 committee and joint appropriations committee shall review
15 the reports submitted pursuant to this act. The committees
16 may meet jointly and may sponsor legislation for
17 introduction in the 2024 legislative budget session jointly
18 or separately as each committee deems appropriate in
19 response to the report.

20

1 **Section 4.** 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)