



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 681

H.P. 502

House of Representatives, February 7, 2019

An Act To Amend the Maine Dental Education Loan Program

Submitted by the Finance Authority of Maine pursuant to Joint Rule 204.

Reference to the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business suggested and ordered printed.

Handwritten signature of Robert B. Hunt in cursive.

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative MASTRACCIO of Sanford.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§7-C**, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. NN, §1
3 and c. 496, §1, is repealed.

4 **Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §12301, sub-§4**, as repealed and replaced by PL 2001, c.
5 471, Pt. B, §11 and amended by PL 2003, c. 689, Pt. B, §§6 and 7, is further amended to
6 read:

7 **4. Underserved population area.** "~~Underserved population area~~" means a
8 ~~population group or geographical area receiving insufficient oral health care, as~~
9 ~~determined by the Commissioner of Health and Human Services and as defined in rules~~
10 ~~adopted by the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to section 12305.~~
11 ~~The rules must take into consideration factors that include, but are not limited to, family~~
12 ~~income levels, availability of dental care and percentage of families qualifying for~~
13 ~~Medicaid coverage~~ an area in the State that is a dental health professional shortage area or
14 medically underserved area or that contains a medically underserved population as
15 defined by the federal Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and
16 Services Administration.

17 **Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §12302, sub-§4**, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. NN, §2
18 and affected by §4 and enacted by c. 496, §2, is amended to read:

19 **4. Maximum amount.** The maximum loan or loan repayment amount available to
20 each participant is \$20,000 per year for a period of up to 4 years. For a loan recipient
21 who receives a first loan after January 1, 2020 or a loan repayment participant who signs
22 a first agreement after January 1, 2020, the maximum loan or loan repayment amount
23 available is \$25,000 per year for a period of up to 4 years.

24 **Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §12302, sub-§5, ¶C**, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. NN,
25 §2 and affected by §4 and enacted by c. 496, §2, is amended to read:

26 C. A loan recipient serving an underserved population area pursuant to paragraph A,
27 subparagraph (2) must serve ~~all~~ patients regardless of ability to pay through insurance
28 or other payment source.

29 **Sec. 5. 20-A MRSA §12302, sub-§6, ¶¶A and B**, as enacted by PL 1999, c.
30 401, Pt. NN, §2 and affected by §4 and enacted by c. 496, §2, are amended to read:

31 A. An applicant will receive payment from the authority on the applicant's
32 outstanding indebtedness for dental education at a rate of \$20,000 per year of service
33 for up to 4 years as long as the applicant continues to serve as a practitioner of dental
34 medicine in an underserved population area. A loan repayment participant who signs
35 a first agreement after January 1, 2020 receives payment from the authority on the
36 participant's outstanding indebtedness for dental education at a rate of up to \$25,000
37 per year of service for up to 4 years as long as the participant continues to serve as a
38 practitioner of dental medicine in an underserved population area.

39 B. A person receiving loan repayment payments under this subsection must serve ~~all~~
40 patients regardless of ability to pay through insurance or other payment source.

1 **Sec. 6. 20-A MRSA §12304**, as amended by PL 2001, c. 471, Pt. B, §12 and PL
2 2003, c. 689, Pt. B, §6, is repealed.

3 **Sec. 7. 20-A MRSA §12305**, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. NN, §2 and
4 affected by §4 and enacted by c. 496, §2 and amended by PL 2003, c. 689, Pt. B, §7, is
5 further amended to read:

6 **§12305. Rules**

7 The authority shall establish rules necessary to implement this chapter. ~~The
8 Commissioner of Health and Human Services shall develop rules for determining
9 underserved population areas. These rules must include a process for ensuring
10 guaranteed access to dental care through technical assistance and site visits to
11 participating providers.~~ The rules authorized by this section must be adopted in
12 accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter ~~H~~ 2. Rules adopted pursuant to this
13 section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter ~~H-A~~ 2-A.

14 **Sec. 8. 20-A MRSA §12306** is enacted to read:

15 **§12306. Stakeholder consultation**

16 In administering the program and assessing its effectiveness, the chief executive
17 officer may consult stakeholders from the dental community, including, but not limited
18 to, representatives of dental education and practitioner communities in the State and
19 organizations representing the interests of low-income communities in the State.

20 **SUMMARY**

21 This bill amends the Maine Dental Education Loan Program by clarifying the
22 definition of underserved population areas; increasing maximum loan amounts under the
23 program; eliminating the advisory committee on dental education; and enabling the Chief
24 Executive Officer of the Finance Authority of Maine to consult key stakeholders in
25 administering the program and evaluating its effectiveness.