

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to student loans and scholarship
 3 obligations of health care practitioners; providing a
 4 short title; amending s. 456.072, F.S.; providing that
 5 failure to repay a specified student loan by health
 6 care practitioners is not considered a failure to
 7 perform a statutory or legal obligation; repealing s.
 8 456.0721, F.S., relating to health care practitioners
 9 in default on student loan or scholarship obligations;
 10 amending s. 456.074, F.S.; conforming a provision to
 11 changes made by the act; providing an effective date.

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 13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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15 Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Protecting Job
 16 Opportunities for Borrowers in Florida Act."

17 Section 2. Paragraph (k) of subsection (1) of section
 18 456.072, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

19 456.072 Grounds for discipline; penalties; enforcement.—

20 (1) The following acts shall constitute grounds for which
 21 the disciplinary actions specified in subsection (2) may be
 22 taken:

23 (k) Failing to perform any statutory or legal obligation
 24 placed upon a licensee. For purposes of this section, failing to
 25 repay a student loan issued or guaranteed by the state or the

26 Federal Government in accordance with the terms of the loan is
 27 not ~~or failing to comply with service scholarship obligations~~
 28 ~~shall be considered a failure to perform a statutory or legal~~
 29 ~~obligation, and the minimum disciplinary action imposed shall be~~
 30 ~~a suspension of the license until new payment terms are agreed~~
 31 ~~upon or the scholarship obligation is resumed, followed by~~
 32 ~~probation for the duration of the student loan or remaining~~
 33 ~~scholarship obligation period, and a fine equal to 10 percent of~~
 34 ~~the defaulted loan amount.~~ Fines collected shall be deposited
 35 into the Medical Quality Assurance Trust Fund.

36 Section 3. Section 456.0721, Florida Statutes, is
 37 repealed.

38 Section 4. Subsection (4) of section 456.074, Florida
 39 Statutes, is amended to read:

40 456.074 Certain health care practitioners; immediate
 41 suspension of license.—

42 ~~(4) Upon receipt of information that a Florida-licensed~~
 43 ~~health care practitioner has defaulted on a student loan issued~~
 44 ~~or guaranteed by the state or the Federal Government, the~~
 45 ~~department shall notify the licensee by certified mail that he~~
 46 ~~or she shall be subject to immediate suspension of license~~
 47 ~~unless, within 45 days after the date of mailing, the licensee~~
 48 ~~provides proof that new payment terms have been agreed upon by~~
 49 ~~all parties to the loan. The department shall issue an emergency~~
 50 ~~order suspending the license of any licensee who, after 45 days~~

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51 ~~following the date of mailing from the department, has failed to~~
52 ~~provide such proof. Production of such proof shall not prohibit~~
53 ~~the department from proceeding with disciplinary action against~~
54 ~~the licensee pursuant to s. 456.073.~~

55 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.