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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Linking Industry to Nursing
3 Education Fund; amending s. 1009.8962, F.S.; revising
4 the Legislative intent for the Linking Industry to
5 Nursing Education (LINE) Fund; revising the definition
6 of the term "health care partner"; authorizing the
7 inclusion of nonmonetary contributions to institutions
8 for purposes of proposals for LINE Fund matching
9 funds; requiring monetary contributions to receive
10 priority in the award of matching funds; revising the
11 authorized uses of awarded funds; requiring proposals
12 for participation in the fund to be submitted by
13 specified persons; providing allowable nonmonetary
14 contributions; providing requirements for the
15 acceptance of nonmonetary contributions as health care
16 matching funds; prohibiting a proposal to participate
17 in the fund from being comprised solely of nonmonetary
18 contributions; revising the criteria the Board of
19 Governors and the Department of Education must use to
20 review proposals; requiring grant funds awarded based
21 on nonmonetary contributions to be based on such
22 contribution's fair market value; authorizing the
23 Board of Governors and the Department of Education to
24 provide multiyear awards under certain circumstances;
25 providing notification requirements for such awards;
26 providing an effective date.

27
28 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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30 Section 1. Section 1009.8962, Florida Statutes, is amended
31 to read:

32 1009.8962 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE)
33 Fund.—

34 (1) This section shall be known and may be cited as the
35 “Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Act.”

36 (2) Recognizing that the state has a persistent and growing
37 nursing shortage, it is the intent of the Legislature to address
38 this critical workforce need by incentivizing collaboration
39 between nursing education programs and health care partners that
40 contribute monetary or nonmonetary contributions through the
41 establishment of the LINE Fund. This fund is intended to meet
42 local, regional, and state workforce demand by recruiting
43 faculty and clinical preceptors, increasing the capacity of
44 high-quality nursing education programs, and increasing the
45 number of nursing education program graduates who are prepared
46 and licensed to enter the workforce.

47 (3) As used in this section, the term:

48 (a) “Health care partner” means a health care provider as
49 defined in s. 768.38(2) which is licensed to operate in this
50 state.

51 (b) “Institution” means a school district career center
52 under s. 1001.44; a charter technical career center under s.
53 1002.34; a Florida College System institution; a state
54 university; an independent nonprofit college or university
55 located and chartered in this state and accredited by an agency
56 or association that is recognized by the database created and
57 maintained by the United States Department of Education to grant
58 baccalaureate degrees; or an independent school, college, or

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59 university with an accredited program as defined in s. 464.003
60 which is located in this state and licensed by the Commission
61 for Independent Education pursuant to s. 1005.31, or an
62 institution authorized under s. 1009.521, which has a nursing
63 education program that meets or exceeds the following:

64 1. For a certified nursing assistant program, a completion
65 rate of at least 70 percent for the prior year.

66 2. For a licensed practical nurse, associate of science in
67 nursing, and bachelor of science in nursing program, a first-
68 time passage rate on the National Council of State Boards of
69 Nursing Licensing Examination of at least 75 percent for the
70 prior year based on a minimum of 10 testing participants.

71 (c) "Student" means a person who is a resident for tuition
72 purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21 and enrolled in a nursing
73 education program at an institution.

74 (4) The LINE Fund shall be administered by the Board of
75 Governors for state universities and the Department of Education
76 for all other institutions.

77 (5) Subject to available funds, for every monetary or
78 nonmonetary contribution ~~dollar contributed~~ to an institution by
79 a health care partner or other person or entity, the fund shall
80 provide a dollar-to-dollar match to the participating
81 institution to implement the activities outlined in the
82 institution's approved proposal. Monetary contributions from
83 health care partners shall receive priority when awarding
84 matching funds to institutions.

85 (6) (a) Funds may be used for student scholarships; r
86 recruitment of additional faculty and preceptors; increasing
87 program enrollment, program completion, and licensure

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88 examination passage rates;~~7~~ equipment;~~7~~ and simulation centers;
89 and internships to advance high-quality nursing education
90 programs throughout the state.

91 (b) Funds may not be used for the construction of new
92 buildings, but may be used to expand, retrofit, or upgrade
93 existing facilities if the proposal will result in increased
94 program enrollments or improved or modernized educational or
95 simulation space for an institution's nursing education program
96 students.

97 (7) (a) To participate, an institution's president, chief
98 administrative officer, or designee ~~institution~~ must submit a
99 timely and completed proposal to the Board of Governors or
100 Department of Education, in a format prescribed by the Board of
101 Governors or Department of Education, as applicable.

102 (b) The proposal must identify a health care partner
103 located and licensed to operate in the state whose ~~monetary~~
104 contributions will be matched by the fund on a dollar-to-dollar
105 basis.

106 (c) Allowable nonmonetary contributions are limited to the
107 following:

108 1. The value of the donated use of health care partner
109 employees as nursing education program instructors or
110 preceptors.

111 2. The value of the donated use of a health care partner's
112 space or equipment by a nursing education program.

113 3. The value of donated educational or simulation
114 equipment.

115 4. Other similar quantifiable donated goods and services
116 deemed by the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as

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117 applicable, to be good faith contributions that support the
118 goals of the LINE Fund.

119 (d) To accept nonmonetary contributions as health care
120 matching funds, the applicant and Board of Governors or
121 Department of Education, as applicable, must quantify the fair
122 market value of the contribution in dollars and certify that the
123 proposed contribution directly supports the goals of the LINE
124 Fund outlined in subsection (2).

125 (e) A proposal may not be comprised solely of nonmonetary
126 contributions.

127 (8) The Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
128 applicable, must review and evaluate each completed and timely
129 submitted proposal according to the following minimum criteria,
130 where applicable:

131 (a) Whether monetary and nonmonetary contributions ~~funds~~
132 committed by the health care partner will contribute to an
133 eligible purpose.

134 (b) How the institution plans to use the funds or
135 nonmonetary contribution, including how such funds or
136 nonmonetary contribution will be utilized to increase student
137 enrollment and program completion.

138 (c) How the health care partner will onboard and retain
139 graduates or otherwise improve the likelihood that graduates
140 will successfully join the state or local workforce.

141 (d) How the funds or nonmonetary contribution will be used
142 to expand the institution's nursing education programs to meet
143 local, regional, or state workforce demands. If applicable, this
144 shall include advanced education nursing programs and how the
145 funds or nonmonetary contribution will increase the number of

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146 faculty and clinical preceptors and planned efforts to utilize
147 the clinical placement process established in s. 14.36.

148 (9) (a) Each institution with an approved proposal shall
149 notify the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
150 applicable, upon receipt of the health care partner provided
151 funds or nonmonetary contribution identified in the proposal.
152 The Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
153 applicable, shall release grant funds, on a dollar-for-dollar
154 basis, up to the amount of funds or the fair market value of the
155 nonmonetary contribution received by the institution, including
156 notifications made on a rolling or periodic basis.

157 (b) If deemed to meet the long-term goals of the LINE Fund,
158 the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
159 applicable, may, but are not required to, award funds for an
160 approved proposal for up to 2 academic years immediately
161 following the academic year within which the initial approval is
162 granted. If the Board of Governors or Department of Education,
163 as applicable, approves a multiyear award to an institution, it
164 must notify the recipient that the award amount in subsequent
165 years is subject to a LINE Fund appropriation and the continued
166 notification of the health care partner's contribution to match
167 the multiyear award of state funds.

168 (c) ~~(b)~~ Annually, by February 1, each institution awarded
169 grant funds in the previous fiscal year shall submit a report to
170 the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
171 applicable, that demonstrates the expansion as outlined in the
172 proposal and the use of funds. At minimum, the report must
173 include, by program level, the number of additional nursing
174 education students enrolled; if scholarships were awarded using

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175 grant funds, the number of students who received scholarships
176 and the average award amount; and the outcomes of students as
177 reported by the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help
178 pursuant to s. 14.36(3)(1).

179 (10) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations and the
180 State Board of Education shall adopt rules to administer the
181 fund, establish dates for the submission and review of
182 proposals, award funds, and other regulations and rules
183 necessary to implement this section.

184 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.