



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

**2017 Assembly Bill 598**

**Assembly Amendment 2**

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### **2017 ASSEMBLY BILL 598**

Assembly Bill 598 makes certain changes to the Physician and Dentist Loan Assistance Program and the Healthcare Provider Loan Assistance Program, administered by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System (“Board”). In general, eligible applicants include certain healthcare providers who agree to practice at least 32 clinic hours per week for three years in one or more eligible practice areas in the state or in a rural area. [ss. 36.60 (3) and 36.61 (3), Stats.] The definition of “eligible practice area” depends on the loan repayment program but generally means a primary care shortage area, a mental health shortage area, an American Indian reservation or trust lands of an American Indian tribe. [ss. 36.60 (1) (ag) and 36.61 (1) (am), Stats.] An applicant may be eligible for up to \$100,000 in education loan repayment assistance, depending on certain factors including the category of healthcare provider that applies for a loan. The loans are awarded on a competitive basis and require the Board to make selections based on certain statutory criteria.

The bill modifies the definition of “eligible practice area” to include a “free or charitable clinic.” Under the bill, a “free or charitable clinic” generally means a safety-net health care organization that satisfies all of the following:

- The organization uses volunteers and staff to provide a range of medical, dental, pharmacy, vision, or behavioral health services to economically disadvantaged individuals who are uninsured, underinsured, or have limited or no access to primary, specialty, or prescription health care.
- The organization is exempt from taxation under section 501 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code or operates as a program component or affiliate of such an organization.

- The organization provides services without regard to a patient's ability to pay.
- The organization charges patients no fee for services or charges a nominal or sliding fee.

Also under the bill, when making a competitive determination, the Board is permitted to establish new selection criteria if the Board determines that existing selection criteria does not apply to an eligible applicant who desires to practice in a "free or charitable clinic."

## **ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT 2**

Assembly Amendment 2 modifies the definition of "free or charitable clinic" to mean a safety-net health care organization that satisfies all of the following:

- The organization uses volunteers and staff to provide a range of medical, dental, pharmacy, vision, or behavioral health services to economically disadvantaged individuals who are uninsured, underinsured, or have limited or no access to primary, specialty, or prescription health care.
- The organization is exempt from taxation under section 501 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code or operates as a program component or affiliate of such an organization.
- The organization provides services without regard to a patient's ability to pay.
- The organization charges patients no fee for services or charges a nominal or sliding fee.
- **The organization does not provide abortion services and is not an affiliate of a person, other than a hospital, that provides abortion services.**

## **BILL HISTORY**

Assembly Bill 598 was introduced by Representatives Kleefisch and others on October 27, 2017. On February 21, 2018, Representatives Kleefisch and Jacque offered Assembly Amendment 2. That same day, the Assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 2 to Assembly Bill 598 and passed Assembly Bill 598, as amended, on voice votes.

JN:ksm