



State of Wisconsin
2021 - 2022 LEGISLATURE

LRB-5303/1
JAM&ARG:cde

2021 ASSEMBLY BILL 1096

March 7, 2022 - Introduced by Representatives B. MEYERS, S. RODRIGUEZ, ANDRACA, BROSTOFF, ANDERSON, SINICKI, SHELTON, HEBL, SNODGRASS, VRUWINK, CABRERA, SPREITZER, SHANKLAND, SUBECK and STUBBS, cosponsored by Senators SMITH, BEWLEY, ROYS, LARSON and PFAFF. Referred to Committee on Colleges and Universities.

1 **AN ACT to create** 20.235 (1) (cy) and 39.396 of the statutes; **relating to:** creating
2 a student loan repayment program for volunteer emergency service providers
3 administered by the Higher Educational Aids Board, granting rule-making
4 authority, and making an appropriation.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill creates a student loan repayment program for volunteer emergency service providers to be administered by the Higher Educational Aids Board. A volunteer emergency service provider is defined in the bill as an individual who is a Wisconsin resident and who actively provides service in this state as a volunteer emergency medical responder, volunteer emergency medical services practitioner, or volunteer fire fighter. To be eligible for financial assistance under the program, the volunteer emergency service provider must 1) complete a two-year probationary period in this state after enrollment in the program; 2) serve as a volunteer emergency service provider, in the year in which financial assistance is provided, in an area in which there is an extremely high need for volunteer emergency services; and 3) have an outstanding educational loan balance. The bill defines "area in which there is an extremely high need for volunteer emergency services" as a county in this state that has a population of 35,000 or less. An eligible volunteer emergency service provider may receive up to \$24,000 paid over six years in student loan relief while the individual continues to be a volunteer emergency service provider.

ASSEMBLY BILL 1096

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 20.235 (1) (cy) of the statutes is created to read:

2 20.235 (1) (cy) *Voluntary emergency service provider loan repayment program.*

3 A sum sufficient for the voluntary emergency service provider loan repayment
4 program under s. 39.396.

5 **SECTION 2.** 39.396 of the statutes is created to read:

6 **39.396 Voluntary emergency service provider loan repayment**
7 **program. (1) DEFINITIONS.** In this section:

8 (a) “Area in which there is an extremely high need for volunteer emergency
9 services” means any county in this state having a population of 35,000 or less.

10 (b) “Emergency medical responder” means an individual certified under s.
11 256.15 (8) (a).

12 (c) “Emergency medical services practitioner” has the meaning given in s.
13 256.01 (5).

14 (d) “Program” means the emergency service provider loan repayment program
15 under sub. (2).

16 (e) “Volunteer emergency service provider” means an individual who is a
17 resident of this state and who actively provides services as a volunteer emergency
18 medical responder, volunteer emergency medical services practitioner, or volunteer
19 fire fighter.

20 **(2) VOLUNTARY EMERGENCY SERVICE PROVIDER LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.** There
21 is established, to be administered by the board, a volunteer emergency service

ASSEMBLY BILL 1096

1 provider loan repayment program. Any individual who is a volunteer emergency
2 service provider in the state may enroll in the program.

3 **(3) ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.** A volunteer emergency service
4 provider is eligible to receive financial assistance as described under sub. (4) if the
5 volunteer emergency service provider meets all of the following requirements:

6 (a) The individual serves as a volunteer emergency service provider in this
7 state for a 2-year probationary period beginning after enrollment in the program.

8 (b) The individual serves as a volunteer emergency service provider, in the year
9 in which the individual receives the financial assistance as described under sub. (4),
10 in an area in which there is an extremely high need for volunteer emergency services.

11 (c) The individual has an outstanding educational loan balance.

12 **(4) LOAN REPAYMENT.** The board may repay, on behalf of an eligible volunteer
13 emergency service provider, up to \$24,000 in educational loans obtained by the
14 volunteer emergency service provider from a public or private lending institution for
15 education at an accredited institution of higher education. Principal and interest
16 due on loans, exclusive of any penalties, may be repaid by the board in each year the
17 volunteer emergency service provider is eligible as follows:

18 (a) \$2,000 in the 3rd year after enrollment in the program.

19 (b) \$2,500 in the 4th year after enrollment in the program.

20 (c) \$3,000 in the 5th year after enrollment in the program.

21 (d) \$4,500 in the 6th year after enrollment in the program.

22 (e) \$5,500 in the 7th year after enrollment in the program.

23 (f) \$6,500 in the 8th year after enrollment in the program.

