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## DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 736 Engrossed

2022 Regular Session

Beaullieu

**Abstract:** Establishes the Athletic Trainer Professional Development Program in the Dept. of Education ("department") and provides for funding and administration of the program and qualifications and restrictions for program offerings.

Proposed law seeks to increase the number of certified athletic trainers at high schools in rural areas of the state by establishing a loan repayment program for qualifying individuals. Defines "athletic trainer" to mean an individual possessing a Masters Degree in Athletic Training from an institution accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education. Defines "rural area" to mean a parish with a population of fewer than 110,000 persons as of the most recent federal decennial census.

Proposed law requires the department to develop and administer a plan for recruitment and retention of athletic trainers at high schools in rural areas. Requires the plan to provide for identification of shortage areas, prioritize long-term and short-term goals and strategies, and provide for public input. Authorizes the department to contract out for implementation of the plan. Prohibits implementation costs from exceeding \$75,000.

Proposed law also establishes a loan repayment program for athletic trainers willing to work for a high school in a rural area and meet other requirements established by the department. Applies only to loans obtained to attend an accredited athletic trainer program. Authorizes retroactive repayment of these loans after each term of service employed at a high school in a rural area, for up to five years. Establishes the following rates for loan repayments pursuant to proposed law:

- (1) Up to \$6,000 per year of service if the individual obtained his degree from a school or program in La.
- (2) Up to \$4,000 per year of service if the individual obtained his degree from a school or program outside of La.

Requires the department to provide an implementation schedule for loan repayments by Jan. 1, 2023.

Proposed law requires the superintendent of education to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out proposed law.

Proposed law establishes the Athletic Trainer Professional Development Fund in the treasury and authorizes the state treasurer to transfer \$1,500,000 into the fund. Prohibits use of the monies in the

fund for purposes outside of proposed law. Provides for interest to be credited to the fund and for unexpended or unencumbered monies to remain in the fund at the end of the fiscal year.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:3721-3726)