

ACT No. 495

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 736

BY REPRESENTATIVE BEAULLIEU

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AN ACT

To enact Chapter 31 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 17:3721 through 3726, relative to increasing the number of certified athletic trainers in rural areas; to establish the Athletic Trainer Professional Development Program; to provide with respect to the powers and duties of the state Department of Education; to provide funding for the program; to provide qualifications and restrictions for the program; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Chapter 31 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 17:3721 through 3726, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

CHAPTER 31. ATHLETIC TRAINER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

§3721. Athletic Trainer Professional Development Program

The Athletic Trainer Professional Development Program is hereby created in the state Department of Education. The program is established to meet the projected shortage of certified athletic trainers employed at high schools in rural areas of the state by increasing the number of certified athletic trainers through a loan repayment program.

1 §3722. Definitions

2 For the purpose of this Chapter, the following terms have the following
3 meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

4 (1) "Athletic trainer" means an individual possessing a master's degree in
5 athletic training from an institution accredited by the Commission on Accreditation
6 of Athletic Training Education and licensed by the Louisiana State Board of Medical
7 Examiners.

8 (2) "Department" means the Department of Education.

9 (3) "Rural area" means a parish with a population of fewer than one hundred
10 ten thousand persons according to the latest federal decennial census.

11 (4) "Superintendent" means the state superintendent of education.

12 §3723. Retention and recruitment

13 A. The department shall develop and administer a plan for recruitment and
14 retention of athletic trainers at high schools in rural areas. The plan shall provide for
15 identification of shortage areas, prioritization of long-term and short-term goals,
16 strategies for recruiting athletic trainers to rural areas, and public input.

17 B. The department shall implement the retention and recruitment plan,
18 directly or through contract. Implementation may include advertising and
19 promotion, professional recruitment services, travel, and all other necessary tasks.
20 Total implementation costs shall not exceed seventy-five thousand dollars.

21 §3724. Loan repayment program

22 A. The department shall administer a loan repayment program.

23 B. To be eligible for the loan repayment program, an applicant shall be an
24 athletic trainer, be willing to work for a high school in a rural area, and meet any
25 other requirements which may be established by the department.

26 C. Educational loans obtained by an eligible applicant for attending an
27 accredited athletic trainer program shall be repaid retroactively after each term of
28 service employed at a high school in a rural area for up to five years depending upon

1 the applicant's length of service. Loans shall be repaid pursuant to the provisions of
2 this Section at the following rates:

3 (1) Six thousand dollars per year of service if the applicant obtained his
4 degree from a school or program in Louisiana.

5 (2) Four thousand dollars per year of service if the applicant obtained his
6 degree from a school or program outside of Louisiana.

7 D. Within three months of the effective date of this Section, the department
8 shall establish an implementation schedule for loan repayments.

9 §3725. Rules

10 The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall promulgate
11 rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act as
12 necessary to carry out the provisions of this Chapter.

13 §3726. Athletic Trainer Professional Development Fund

14 There is hereby created as a special fund in the state treasury the Athletic
15 Trainer Professional Development Fund, referred to in this Section as the "fund".
16 The treasurer is hereby authorized to transfer and deposit one and one-half million
17 dollars of state general fund monies into the fund after compliance with the
18 requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana relative
19 to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund. Monies in the fund shall be used for the
20 programs established in this Chapter. Monies in the fund shall be invested by the
21 treasurer in the same manner as monies in the state general fund and all interest
22 earned shall be deposited in and credited to the fund. All unexpended or
23 unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the
24 fund.

25 Section 2. The provisions of Section 1 of this Act shall become effective when an
26 Act of the Louisiana Legislature containing a specific appropriation of monies for the
27 implementation of the provisions of this Act becomes effective.

28 Section 3. The provisions of Sections 2 and 3 of this Act shall become effective
29 upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time

1 for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section
2 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved
3 by the legislature, the provisions of Sections 2 and 3 of this Act shall become effective on
4 the day following such approval.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____