

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2023
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1544

5 By: Representative L. Johnson
6

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT CONCERNING THE OSTEOPATHIC RURAL MEDICAL
9 PRACTICE STUDENT LOAN AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; TO
10 AMEND THE DEFINITION OF MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED FOR
11 PURPOSES OF THE OSTEOPATHIC RURAL MEDICAL PRACTICE
12 STUDENT LOAN AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER
13 PURPOSES.
14
15

Subtitle

16 CONCERNING THE OSTEOPATHIC RURAL MEDICAL
17 PRACTICE STUDENT LOAN AND SCHOLARSHIP
18 PROGRAM.
19
20
21

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
23

24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code §§ 6-81-1801 - 6-81-1803 are amended to read
25 as follows:

26 6-81-1801. Creation.

27 There is established within the Division of Higher Education the
28 Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student
29 Loan and Scholarship Program to be administered by the Osteopathic Rural
30 Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board.
31

32 6-81-1802. Definitions.

33 As used in this subchapter:

34 (1) "Medically underserved population" means ~~an area in Arkansas~~
35 ~~that the Osteopathic Rural Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship~~
36 ~~Board determines has unmet needs for medical services due to factors,~~



1 ~~including without limitation:~~

2 ~~(A) The ratio of primary care physicians to population;~~

3 ~~(B) The infant mortality rate;~~

4 ~~(C) The percentage of:~~

5 ~~(i) Population with incomes below the federal~~
 6 ~~poverty level, as it existed on January 1, 2019;~~

7 ~~(ii) Resident individuals sixty (60) years of age~~
 8 ~~and older; and~~

9 ~~(iii) Physicians sixty (60) years of age and older;~~

10 ~~(D) Accessibility within the area to primary care~~
 11 ~~medicine; and~~

12 ~~(E) Other relevant criteria the board may deem necessary~~
 13 ~~for a determination of unmet needs for medical services the same as defined~~
 14 ~~in 42 U.S.C. § 254b, as in effect on January 1, 2024; and~~

15 (2) "Primary care medicine" means health care provided in one
 16 (1) of the following areas of practice:

17 (A) Family medicine;

18 (B) General internal medicine;

19 (C) General internal medicine and pediatrics;

20 (D) General pediatrics;

21 (E) General obstetrics and gynecology;

22 (F) General surgery;

23 (G) Emergency medicine; and

24 (H) Geriatrics; ~~and~~

25 ~~(3) "Qualified rural community" means an area:~~

26 ~~(A) With a population below twenty thousand (20,000)~~
 27 ~~according to the most recent federal census;~~

28 ~~(B) That is at least twenty (20) miles from a city or town~~
 29 ~~with a population of more than twenty thousand (20,000) according to the most~~
 30 ~~recent federal census; and~~

31 ~~(C) That is reasonably determined by the board to be~~
 32 ~~medically underserved.~~

33
 34 6-81-1803. Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
 35 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board.

36 (a)(1) There is established the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically

1 Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board
 2 ~~composed of~~ that shall consist of six (6) members, which shall include:

3 (A) One (1) ~~representative of~~ member who shall be
 4 appointed by the Governor after consultation with each medical school in
 5 Arkansas that is not the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, subject
 6 to confirmation by the Senate;

7 (B) One (1) ~~representative of~~ member who shall be
 8 appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Arkansas Osteopathic
 9 Medical Association, who shall serve as vice chair, subject to confirmation
 10 by the Senate;

11 (C) Two (2) physician members appointed by the Governor
 12 after consultation with the Arkansas Osteopathic Medical Association, giving
 13 preference to physicians who have received osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically
 14 underserved population medical practice loans, community match loans, or
 15 income incentives, and subject to confirmation by the Senate; and

16 (D) Two (2) representatives appointed by the Governor
 17 after consultation with the Arkansas Hospital Association, Inc., and subject
 18 to confirmation by the Senate.

19 (2) Members of the board shall:

20 (A) Serve a term of three (3) years; and

21 (B) Not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

22 (3) Except as provided under subsection (c) of this section,
 23 members of the board shall serve without compensation.

24 (4) Vacancies shall be filled in a similar manner as provided
 25 under subdivisions (a)(1) and (2) of this section.

26 (b) The board shall:

27 (1) Promulgate reasonable rules necessary to execute the
 28 provisions of this subchapter, including without limitation rules addressing
 29 the requirements and in conformance with the requirements of the Arkansas
 30 Administrative Procedure Act, § 25-15-201 et seq., and other appropriate
 31 state laws in promulgating and placing rules into effect for a:

32 (A) ~~For a health~~ Health professions shortage area;

33 (B) ~~To~~ Community with a medically underserved population
 34 to become a qualified rural community eligible to participate in the
 35 Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student
 36 Loan and Scholarship Program under this subchapter; and

1 (C) ~~For a procedure~~ Procedure to resolve disputes arising
 2 out of or relating to ~~a rural~~ an osteopathic medically underserved population
 3 practice or community match loan or income incentive contract;

4 (2) Prescribe forms for and regulate the submission of loan
 5 applications;

6 (3) Determine eligibility of applicants;

7 (4) Allow or disallow loan or income incentive applications;

8 (5) Contract, increase, decrease, terminate, and otherwise
 9 regulate all loan and income incentive disbursements for these purposes,
 10 receipts for their repayment, and convert loans to scholarships or grants, as
 11 applicable;

12 (6) Manage, operate, and control all funds and property
 13 appropriated or otherwise contributed for this purpose;

14 (7) Accept gifts, grants, bequests, or devises and apply them as
 15 a part of the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
 16 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Program;

17 (8) Sue and be sued as the board; and

18 (9) Accept moneys from federal programs that may be used for
 19 furtherance of the purposes of this subchapter.

20 (c) The members of the board may receive expense reimbursement and
 21 stipends in accordance with § 25-16-901 et seq.

22 (d) The board shall administer the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically
 23 Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Program
 24 and the Community Match Rural Physician Recruitment Program.

25
 26 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1804(a), concerning a loan
 27 application, is amended to read as follows:

28 (a) An individual may apply for a loan under this subchapter on forms
 29 prescribed by the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
 30 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board if the individual is:

31 (1) Accepted for admission to or enrolled in good standing in a
 32 medical school in Arkansas in studies that lead to the degree of Doctor of
 33 Osteopathic Medicine; and

34 (2) A bona fide resident of Arkansas.

35
 36 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code §§ 6-81-1805 - 6-81-1807 is amended to read

1 as follows:

2 6-81-1805. Medical students – Investigation after application.

3 When an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical
4 practice loan application is filed with the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically
5 Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board,
6 the board shall examine the application, investigate the ability, character,
7 and qualifications of the applicant, and investigate the financial standing
8 of the applicant or his or her parents to determine whether the applicant is
9 in need of a loan to advance his or her medical education.

10

11 6-81-1806. Medical students – Purpose of loan.

12 Osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice
13 loans provided for in this subchapter shall be made for the sole purpose of
14 paying the applicant's tuition, maintenance, and educational expenses and the
15 necessary living expenses of his or her dependents while the applicant is
16 enrolled in a program of medical education as described in this subchapter.

17

18 6-81-1807. Medical students – Eligibility for initial and renewal
19 loans.

20 (a) The Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
21 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board may make osteopathic rural
22 medical practice loans to the applicant, each osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically
23 underserved population medical practice loan being expressly made subject to
24 the provisions of § 6-81-1809(c) and § 6-81-1810, if the board finds that:

25 (1) The applicant is a bona fide resident of Arkansas;

26 (2) The applicant has been accepted for admission to or is
27 enrolled in good standing in studies that lead to the degree of Doctor of
28 Osteopathic Medicine;

29 (3) The applicant is enrolled in a medically underserved and
30 rural practice curriculum;

31 (4) The applicant needs financial assistance to complete his or
32 her medical studies;

33 (5) The applicant desires to practice medicine in an eligible
34 ~~qualified rural~~ community with a medically underserved population; and

35 (6) The applicant is a person of good moral character and one
36 who has the talent and capacity to profit by medical studies.

1 (b) Subject to the availability of funds, an initial osteopathic ~~rural~~
 2 medically underserved population medical practice loan for one (1) academic
 3 year shall be renewable annually for the number of years required to complete
 4 studies leading to the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree or for
 5 additional amounts, not to exceed the maximum amounts specified in § 6-81-
 6 1808, but all subsequent osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population
 7 medical practice loans shall be granted only upon application by the
 8 recipient and a finding by the board that:

9 (1) The applicant has completed successfully the medical studies
 10 of the preceding academic year and remains in good standing as an enrolled
 11 student in the college;

12 (2) The applicant is enrolled or participating in a medically
 13 underserved and rural practice curriculum;

14 (3) The applicant continues to be a resident of Arkansas; and

15 (4) The applicant's financial situation continues to warrant
 16 financial assistance made under the conditions of this section.

17
 18 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1808(a), concerning the maximum amount
 19 of loans, is amended to read as follows:

20 (a) The maximum amount of each osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved
 21 population medical practice loan for osteopathic medical students shall not
 22 exceed sixteen thousand five hundred dollars (\$16,500) per academic year or
 23 those costs that are reasonable and necessary for the student's attendance as
 24 determined by the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
 25 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board.

26
 27 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code §§ 6-81-1809 and 6-81-1810 are amended to
 28 read as follows:

29 6-81-1809. Loan contracts – Osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved
 30 population medical practice loans – Obligations and conditions.

31 (a) The Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
 32 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board shall enter into a loan contract
 33 with the applicant to whom an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved
 34 population medical practice loan is made.

35 (b) The contract shall be approved by the Attorney General and shall
 36 be signed by the Chair of the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved

1 Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board, countersigned
2 by the Secretary of the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population
3 Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board, and signed by the
4 applicant.

5 (c) Each applicant to whom an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved
6 population medical practice loan or loans are granted by the Osteopathic
7 ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and
8 Scholarship Board shall execute a written loan contract that incorporates the
9 following obligations and conditions:

10 (1)(A) The recipient of an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically
11 underserved population medical practice loan or loans shall bindingly
12 contract that he or she shall practice primary care medicine full time in a
13 ~~qualified rural~~ community with a medically underserved population upon
14 completion of:

15 (i) His or her medical internship of one (1) year
16 undertaken immediately following the earning of the degree of Doctor of
17 Osteopathic Medicine;

18 (ii) Four (4) additional years of medical training
19 beyond the internship if the training has been approved in advance by the
20 Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student
21 Loan and Scholarship Board and includes practice experience in a ~~rural~~
22 community with a medically underserved population; or

23 (iii) At the request of the recipient of an
24 osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice loan, the
25 Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student
26 Loan and Scholarship Board may approve the recipient's request to practice in
27 more than one (1) ~~qualified rural~~ community with a medically underserved
28 population to meet his or her obligation to practice full time if the
29 Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student
30 Loan and Scholarship Board determines, based upon guidelines established by
31 the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice
32 Student Loan and Scholarship Board, that the physician need in the ~~rural~~
33 communities with medically underserved populations cannot sustain a full-time
34 medical practice or that other compelling circumstances exist.

35 (B) The recipient of an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically
36 underserved population medical practice loan or loans shall bindingly

1 contract that for each year's loan he or she shall practice medicine in
2 accordance with subdivision (c)(1)(A) of this section for a whole year.

3 (C) For each continuous whole year of medical practice, in
4 accordance with subdivision (c)(1)(A) of this section, subject to reasonable
5 leave periods, including without limitation vacation, sick leave, continuing
6 medical education, jury duty, funerals, holidays, or military service, the
7 Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student
8 Loan and Scholarship Board shall cancel, by converting to a scholarship
9 grant, the full amount of one (1) year's loan plus accrued interest;

10 (2)(A) The recipient of an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically
11 underserved population medical practice loan or loans shall bindingly
12 contract that not engaging in the practice of medicine in accordance with the
13 loan contract and with this subchapter may result in suspension of his or her
14 license to practice medicine in this state.

15 (B) The recipient's medical license may not be suspended
16 unless the recipient's contract contained a specific term that loss of
17 license was a consequence of breach and the recipient signed a written
18 acknowledgment of understanding that the suspension of license was explained
19 to him or her orally as a potential consequence of breach of the contractual
20 provisions.

21 (C) The suspension may be for a period of years equivalent
22 to the number of years that the recipient is obligated to practice medicine
23 in a ~~rural-area~~ community with a medically underserved population but has not
24 so practiced and until the loan with interest together with any civil money
25 penalties, as reduced by each full year of medical practice according to the
26 terms of the loan contract, is paid in full;

27 (3) Any communication from a medical school in Arkansas that is
28 not the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences with any state medical
29 licensing board shall include a notation that the recipient of an osteopathic
30 rural medical practice loan has a contract with the State of Arkansas to
31 practice medicine in a ~~rural~~ community with a medically underserved
32 population and that breach of that contract may result in suspension of the
33 recipient's Arkansas medical license;

34 (4)(A) In the event that any osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically
35 underserved population medical practice loan recipient under this subchapter
36 does not engage in the practice of medicine in accordance with the terms of

1 this section and of his or her loan contract in order to have the loan
 2 contract recognized as a scholarship, the recipient shall remain obligated to
 3 repay the loan or loans received, together with interest at the maximum rate
 4 allowed by Arkansas law or the federal discount rate plus five percent (5%)
 5 per annum, whichever is the lesser, the interest to accrue from the date each
 6 payment of funds was received by the recipient.

7 (B) Neither interest nor the obligation to repay the
 8 principal sums accrued shall accrue during any one (1) period of time that
 9 the recipient involuntarily serves on active duty in the United States Armed
 10 Forces.

11 (C) Repayment of principal with interest shall be due and
 12 payable in full at the earliest to occur of the following events:

13 (i) Failure to remain enrolled in a medically
 14 underserved and rural practice curriculum;

15 (ii) Failure to remain in enrollment status
 16 continuously to completion of the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
 17 for any reason other than temporary personal illness;

18 (iii) Failure to complete the internship;

19 (iv)(a) Failure to engage in the full-time practice
 20 of medicine while residing in a ~~qualified rural~~ community with a medically
 21 underserved population in Arkansas as defined in § 6-81-1802.

22 (b) However, the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically
 23 Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board
 24 may waive the residency requirement on a case-by-case basis; and

25 (v) Failure to establish a practice as described
 26 under subdivision (c)(4)(C)(iv)(a) of this section within six (6) months
 27 following either internship or four (4) additional years of medical education
 28 that includes practice experience in a ~~rural~~ community with a medically
 29 underserved population.

30 (D) In the event of the death of the recipient, the entire
 31 loan amount that has not been converted to a scholarship grant pursuant to
 32 the terms of the loan contract shall be due and payable;

33 (5) If an alternate on the waiting list for acceptance to an
 34 osteopathic medical school in Arkansas enters into an osteopathic ~~rural~~
 35 medically underserved population medical practice program contract
 36 conditioned only upon the applicant's being accepted for admission to the

1 college and otherwise meets the requirements of § 6-81-1807 and if the
 2 applicant is moved to the top of the waiting list under § 6-81-1815, the
 3 alternate's contract shall contain an additional term that breach of the
 4 contract may result in civil money penalties in the amount of one hundred
 5 percent (100%) of the loan amount; and

6 (6) This subsection shall not prohibit the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~
 7 Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and
 8 Scholarship Board from considering and entering into a negotiated settlement
 9 with the osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice
 10 loan recipient involving the license suspension, the amount of the civil
 11 money penalty, and the terms of repayment of the loan.

12 (d) The Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
 13 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board may amend agreements entered into
 14 with any loan recipient at any time prior to full performance of the
 15 recipient's contractual obligations.

16 (e)(1) An osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical
 17 practice loan recipient may apply to an osteopathic medical school in
 18 Arkansas for a waiver of the contractual provisions set forth in subdivision
 19 (c)(2) of this section.

20 (2)(A) If the osteopathic medical school in Arkansas determines
 21 that exigent circumstances warrant a waiver, the loan recipient shall be
 22 notified in writing.

23 (B) The osteopathic medical school in Arkansas shall
 24 immediately notify the Arkansas State Medical Board of such determination.

25
 26 6-81-1810. Funding of loans.

27 (a)(1) All payments for osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved
 28 population practice loans and community match loans under this subchapter
 29 shall be made on requisitions signed by the Chair of the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~
 30 Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and
 31 Scholarship Board drawn against the funds held for the purpose of this
 32 subchapter.

33 (2) These funds, consisting of state appropriations so
 34 designated, revolving amounts received from repayment of loans and interest,
 35 and all funds and property and income received by the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~
 36 Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and

1 Scholarship Board under its authority to accept and apply gifts, bequests,
2 and devises shall be held in trust and disbursed by the fiscal officers of a
3 medical school in Arkansas that is not the University of Arkansas for Medical
4 Sciences for the aforesaid purposes.

5 (b) Funds collected as a result of a recipient's breach of an
6 osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population practice loan contract or
7 community match loan contract shall be:

8 (1) Held in trust for the use of the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically
9 Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Program
10 and the Community Match Rural Physician Recruitment Program, or as otherwise
11 deemed appropriate by the board in its discretion; and

12 (2) Disbursed by the fiscal officer of an osteopathic medical
13 school in Arkansas under this subchapter.

14
15 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1811(a), concerning the annual report
16 made by the Osteopathic Rural Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship
17 Board, is amended to read as follows:

18 (a) The Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
19 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board shall make an annual report to
20 the Governor concerning the activities of the board and shall file a copy of
21 its report with the Legislative Council.

22
23 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1812(a) and (b), concerning the
24 resolution of disputes under the Osteopathic Rural Medical Practice Student
25 Loan and Scholarship Program, are amended to read as follows:

26 (a) Any applicant for a loan or income incentive issued by the
27 Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student
28 Loan and Scholarship Board, any person who has been granted a loan or has
29 been granted income incentives by the board, or any party to an osteopathic
30 ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice or community match
31 loan or income incentive may appeal any decision or action by the board
32 relating to the application for a loan or income incentive or relating to a
33 loan or income incentive granted by the board under the dispute resolution
34 procedure established under this subchapter.

35 (b)(1) The board, under § 6-81-1803(b)(1), shall promulgate rules
36 establishing a procedure that may be used by a loan or income incentive

1 recipient, the board, or a ~~qualified rural~~ community with a medically
 2 underserved population to resolve any dispute arising out of or relating to
 3 an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice or
 4 community match loan or income incentive contract, including the validity or
 5 interpretation of a contract term, contract enforcement or defenses, the
 6 occurrence of an event of default or breach, loan repayment, the assessment
 7 or imposition of contract damages or civil money penalties, or other related
 8 disputes.

9 (2) The rules may provide for alternative dispute resolution,
 10 such as mediation, as appropriate.

11 (3) The dispute resolution procedure established by the board
 12 shall be followed before the initiation of any litigation related to an
 13 osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice or
 14 community match loan or income incentive contract.

15
 16 SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1813 is amended to read as follows:

17 6-81-1813. Medical school graduates – Community match contract –
 18 Eligibility.

19 (a)(1) The Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
 20 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board shall administer the Community
 21 Match Rural Physician Recruitment Program.

22 (2)(A) Interested ~~rural~~ communities with medically underserved
 23 populations may apply to the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved
 24 Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board to participate
 25 in the ~~program as a qualified rural community~~ Community Match Rural Physician
 26 Recruitment Program.

27 (B) The Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population
 28 Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board shall approve a
 29 designated representative or representatives of the ~~qualified rural~~ community
 30 with a medically underserved population to assist the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~
 31 Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and
 32 Scholarship Board in matters relating to any community match contracts
 33 entered into by the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population
 34 Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board and the ~~qualified rural~~
 35 community with a medically underserved population.

36 (b) The Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical

1 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board, in conjunction with a ~~qualified~~
 2 ~~rural~~ community with a medically underserved population, may grant community
 3 match income incentives to applicants, each incentive being expressly made
 4 subject to § 6-81-1814, if it finds that:

5 (1) The applicant is a graduate of:

6 (A) An accredited osteopathic medical school in the United
 7 States; or

8 (B) A foreign medical school if the applicant:

9 (i) Was a resident of Arkansas and citizen of the
 10 United States prior to enrollment in the foreign medical school; and

11 (ii) Has been licensed by the Arkansas State Medical
 12 Board;

13 (2) The applicant satisfies one (1) of the following criteria:

14 (A) He or she is enrolled in a residency or other training
 15 program in an area of primary care medicine; or

16 (B) No more than two (2) years before the date of the
 17 application, he or she completed a residency or other training program in an
 18 area of primary care medicine;

19 (3) The applicant desires to practice medicine in the ~~qualified~~
 20 ~~rural~~ community with a medically underserved population; and

21 (4) The designated representative or representatives of the
 22 ~~qualified rural~~ community with a medically underserved population approve the
 23 applicant.
 24

25 SECTION 9. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1814(a), concerning community match
 26 contracts, is amended to read as follows:

27 (a)(1) The Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
 28 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board and the ~~qualified rural~~ community
 29 with a medically underserved population shall enter a joint community match
 30 income incentive contract with the applicant.

31 (2) The form of the community match income incentive contract
 32 shall be approved by the Attorney General and shall be signed by the Chair of
 33 the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice
 34 Student Loan and Scholarship Board, the Secretary of the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~
 35 Medically Underserved Population Medical Practice Student Loan and
 36 Scholarship Board, the designated representative or representatives of the

1 ~~qualified rural~~ community with a medically underserved population, and the
2 applicant.

3
4 SECTION 10. Arkansas Code §§ 6-81-1815 - 6-81-1817 are amended to read
5 as follows:

6 6-81-1815. Medical school alternates – ~~Rural~~ Medically underserved
7 population medical practice loans.

8 (a) If an alternate on the waiting list for acceptance to an
9 osteopathic medical school in Arkansas demonstrates a willingness to enter
10 into an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice
11 loan contract and meets the requirements of § 6-81-1807, the applicant shall
12 be moved to the top of the waiting list upon entering into an osteopathic
13 ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice student loan
14 contract.

15 (b) The priority on the waiting list for an alternate who enters into
16 an osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical practice
17 student loan contract shall be determined by the date and time such an
18 alternate enters into the ~~rural~~ medically underserved population medical
19 practice student loan contract.

20
21 6-81-1816. Tracking loan contract compliance.

22 An osteopathic medical school in Arkansas shall:

23 (1) Track graduates who were recipients of osteopathic ~~rural~~
24 medically underserved population medical practice loans under this subchapter
25 for the length of their contractual obligations; and

26 (2) Report to the Legislative Council by October 1 of each even-
27 numbered year regarding the compliance of those graduates with the terms of
28 their contracts.

29
30 6-81-1817. Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
31 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Program Administrator.

32 (a) There is established an Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved
33 Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Program
34 Administrator.

35 (b) The administrator shall:

36 (1) Be employed by the Division of Higher Education;

1 (2) Serve as liaison between osteopathic ~~rural~~ medically
2 underserved population medical practice student loan recipients and rural
3 communities by:

4 (A) Working with the communities to identify their unique
5 needs, to develop profiles of their ideal candidates, and to prepare for
6 recruitment visits; and

7 (B) Assisting medical students and residents to identify
8 medically underserved ~~and other rural~~ communities that suit their personal
9 and medical practice needs and to meet their contractual obligations;

10 (3) Collect and monitor Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved
11 Population Medical Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Program data,
12 including demographic data of participants and communities, service
13 completion rates, retention rates beyond service completion, satisfaction of
14 obligated physicians and communities, and other information;

15 (4) Prepare annual program evaluations and present the
16 evaluations to the Osteopathic ~~Rural~~ Medically Underserved Population Medical
17 Practice Student Loan and Scholarship Board;

18 (5) Assist with preparation and submission of program reports;

19 (6) Attend board meetings in a nonvoting capacity; and

20 (7) Perform other functions assigned by the board.

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