

**Senate Bill No. 196**

(By Senators Stollings, Laird, Miller, Palumbo, Prezioso, Wills,  
Yost, Jenkins and Foster)

[Introduced January 16, 2012; referred to the Committee on  
Education; and then to the Committee on Finance.]

**Interim  
Bill**

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by  
adding thereto a new section, designated §18C-3-1a, relating  
to providing a loan forgiveness program for dentists and  
hygienists.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended  
by adding thereto a new section, designated §18C-3-1a, to read as  
follows:

**ARTICLE 3. HEALTH PROFESSIONALS STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS.**

**§18C-3-1a. Dentist or hygienist education loan program;  
administration; eligibility and loan cancellation;  
required report.**

(a) For the purposes of this section, Vice Chancellor of  
Administration means the person employed pursuant to section two,

1 article four, chapter eighteen-b of this code.

2 (b) There is hereby created a Special Revolving Fund account  
3 under the commission in the State Treasury to be known as the  
4 Dentist and Hygienist Education Student Loan Fund which shall be  
5 used to carry out the purposes of this section. The fund consists  
6 of:

7 (1) Appropriations provided by the Legislature;

8 (2) Repayment of any loans made under this section;

9 (3) Amounts provided by Dentist, or Hygienist Associations,  
10 hospitals or other medical provider organizations in this state, or  
11 by political subdivisions of the state, under an agreement which  
12 requires the recipient to practice his or her dentist or hygienist  
13 profession in the political subdivision providing the funds, or  
14 otherwise in this state, for a predetermined period of time and  
15 that thirty percent of their practice be dedicated to persons who  
16 receive services under the state Medicaid program set forth in  
17 chapter nine of this code; and

18 (4) Other amounts available from external sources.

19 Balances remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal year  
20 do not expire or revert. All costs associated with administering  
21 this section shall be paid from the Dentist and Hygienist Education  
22 Student Loan Fund.

23 (c) The Vice Chancellor for Administration may utilize any  
24 funds in the Health Education Student Loan Fund for the purposes of

1 the dentists or hygienist student loan program. The commission  
2 shall determine and give priority for the loans to residents of  
3 this state. An individual is eligible for loan consideration upon:

4 (1) Demonstrating financial need;

5 (2) Meeting established academic standards;

6 (3) Is enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an accredited  
7 institution of higher education in this state in a program leading  
8 to the degree of dentist or hygienist;

9 (4) Not yet receiving one of the degrees provided in  
10 subdivision (3) of this subsection;

11 (5) Agrees to dedicate at least thirty percent of his or her  
12 practice to persons receiving services under the state Medicaid  
13 program; and

14 (6) Not defaulting on any previous student loan.

15 (d) At the end of each fiscal year, any individual who has  
16 received a dentist or hygienist student loan and rendered services  
17 as a dentist or hygienist in this state in a medically underserved  
18 area or in a dental or hygienist specialty in which there is a  
19 shortage of qualified dentists or dental hygienists as determined  
20 by the Division of Health at the time the loan was granted, may  
21 submit to the commission a notarized, sworn statement of service on  
22 a form provided for that purpose. Upon receipt of the statement  
23 the commission shall cancel \$5,000 of the outstanding loan or loans  
24 for every full twelve consecutive calendar months of such service.

1           (e) No later than thirty days following the end of each fiscal  
2 year, the Vice Chancellor for Administration shall prepare and  
3 submit a report to the commission for inclusion in the statewide  
4 report card required under section eight, article one-b, chapter  
5 eighteen-b to be submitted to the Legislative Oversight Commission  
6 on Education Accountability established under section eleven,  
7 article three-a of chapter twenty-nine-a of this code. At a  
8 minimum, the report shall include the following information:

- 9           (1) The number of loans awarded in each specialty area;  
10          (2) The total amount of the loans awarded;  
11          (3) The amount of any unexpended moneys in the fund; and  
12          (4) The rate of default during the previous fiscal year on the  
13 repayment of loans granted pursuant to this section.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide a loan forgiveness program for dentists and hygienists similar to what currently exists for medical doctors and osteopathic physicians.

This section is new; therefore, strike-throughs and underscoring have been omitted.

This bill was recommended for passage during the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature by the Joint Committee on Health