

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 889 (Senator Ferguson)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Nancy Grasmick Teacher Award and Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service
Summer Internship Scholarship - Qualifications

This bill expands eligibility for two programs so that specified individuals who attend or attended an institution of higher education outside the State, and meet the other current eligibility requirements, are eligible. Specifically, it expands eligibility for the Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP) so that a recipient of the Nancy Grasmick Teacher Award may receive an award if the individual attended a specified institution of higher education outside the State. The bill also expands eligibility for the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Summer Internship Scholarship Program by allowing a junior, senior, or graduate student who attends an institution of higher education outside the State to participate if the student graduated from a high school in the State.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Expanding *eligibility* for the LARP and Sondheim scholarships does not require additional spending. However, in order for *awards* to be made to all applicants currently on the waiting list and newly eligible applicants, general fund expenditures will need to increase beginning in FY 2014. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: LARP provides loan repayment assistance in exchange for certain service commitments to help ensure that underserved areas of the State have sufficient numbers of primary care physicians, dentists, and professionals serving underserved areas of the State or low-income families. The program is subdivided into LARP, Maryland Dent Care Loan Assistance Repayment Program, and Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians. Individuals must be employed full time in State or local government or in a nonprofit organization that assists low-income, underserved residents or underserved areas in the State.

LARP

Eligible employment fields include lawyers, nurses, nurse faculty members, physical and occupational therapists, social workers, speech pathologists, physician assistants, and teachers who have received a resident teacher certificate from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) after completing an approved alternative teaching preparation program.

According to statute, the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) may adopt regulations to establish the maximum starting income for eligibility, the maximum total income for eligibility, and the limit on the total amount of assistance provided.

Priority is given to individuals who have graduated from an institution of higher education in the last three years. Priority employment fields established by law are legal services and nursing. Priority for awarding is also given to applicants who are employed as nurse faculty members or applicants who teach in schools designated as federal Title I, schools identified for improvement by MSDE or who teach in designated critical shortage subject fields. Awards are capped at \$10,000 per year.

Chapter 496 of 2012 (HB 613) established the Nancy Grasmick Teacher Award within LARP for Maryland public school teachers who have taught in Maryland for at least two years in (1) science, technology, engineering, or math subjects or (2) a school in which at least 75% of the students are enrolled in the free and reduced-price meal program. A teacher must also have received the highest performance evaluation rating for the most recent year available.

The Governor's proposed fiscal 2014 budget includes \$1.5 million in general funds for LARP. MHEC reports that, in fiscal 2012, 194 awards totaling \$1.1 million were made, and the average award amount was \$5,847. In fiscal 2012, 127 applicants were placed on the waiting list due to lack of funds.

Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Summer Internship Scholarship Program

Chapter 490 of 2007 (HB 269) established the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Summer Internship Scholarship Program to assist college and graduate students to explore public service career opportunities through summer internships. Priority for participation in the program must be given to eligible students who (1) are residents of the State; (2) have demonstrated interest in careers in public service; and (3) assist in providing legal services to low-income State residents, social work services to low-income State residents, nursing services in nursing shortage areas, or other services in the public or nonprofit sectors in which there is a shortage of qualified practitioners to low-income or underserved residents or areas of the State.

The Shriver Center at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) administers the program and serves as a clearinghouse for public and nonprofit entities that wish to hire summer interns from the program. The Shriver Center may award scholarships for \$3,000 under the program each year, subject to the availability of funds.

The Shriver Center advises that the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Summer Internship Scholarship Program has been able to award summer internship scholarships to approximately 45 students annually in recent years out of approximately 200 eligible applicants. The program is supported with State general fund appropriations to UMBC.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 329 (Delegates Rosenberg and Kaiser) - Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): Maryland Higher Education Commission, University System of Maryland, Shriver Center, Department of Legislative Services

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mc/rhh

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