



DATE: March 14, 2023 **COMMITTEE:** House Appropriations
BILL NO: House Bill 1061
BILL TITLE: Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program - Private Company Employees
With a Master's Degree in Social Work - Eligible Employment
POSITION: Support

Kennedy Krieger Institute supports House Bill 1061 - Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program - Private Company Employees With a Master's Degree in Social Work - Eligible Employment.

Bill Summary:

House Bill 1061 expands the Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program to include individuals with a master's in social work that is employed by a private company in a public facing role.

Background:

Kennedy Krieger Institute is dedicated to improving the lives of children and young adults with developmental, behavioral, cognitive, and physical challenges. Kennedy Krieger's services include inpatient, outpatient, school-based, and community-based programs. Over 27,000 individuals receive services annually at Kennedy Krieger. We employ more than 2,600 persons who play a vital role in our mission to transform the lives of children with disorders of the brain.

At Kennedy Krieger, clinical social workers are part of an interdisciplinary teams of professionals. Through their work, they enable individuals and their families to utilize their natural strengths to manage the ongoing realities and stresses of disability and other emotional or medical conditions that affect individual, family and community functioning and relationships. The social work department provides the following clinical services, as determined by individual and family needs, through any one of the department's inpatient or outpatient programs at Kennedy Krieger.

- Clinical evaluation of individual and family functioning
- Development of an individualized treatment plan
- Individual, family, couple, play and group therapy and counseling
- Educational, support and stress management groups
- Case management

Rationale:

Before the pandemic, there was a global shortage in the healthcare workforce¹. Predictions forecast that employment demands in healthcare will grow faster this decade compared to all other occupations. This includes an increased need for social workers, with demand expected to increase 13% through 2029.²

Social workers are an essential part of the care team. But, due to ongoing shortages, there is a lack of available individuals to serve in these positions. Having a loan assistance repayment program available to individuals with a master's degree in social work will remove a barrier to entering the field by helping to pay for necessary, expensive schooling. Additionally, it will add to the workforce of schools, adding important health care professionals to the frontline to assist students. This will have tremendous impact in the lives of Maryland's children by getting them necessary resources.

Kennedy Krieger Institute requests a favorable report on House Bill 1061.

Emily Arneson – AVP Government Affairs – arneson@kennedykrieger.org or 443-631-2188
707 North Broadway Baltimore, Maryland 21205 (443) 923-9200/Telephone (443)923-9125/Facsimile

¹ Figueroa CA, Harrison R, Chauhan A, Meyer L. Priorities and challenges for health leadership and workforce management globally: a rapid review. *BMC Health Services Research*. 2019;19(1)doi:10.1186/s12913-019-4080-7

² Source: www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm#tab-1