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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to the Linking Industry to Nursing Education Fund; amending s. 1009.8962, F.S.; revising legislative intent to include health science education programs and students in the purpose of the Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund; revising the definition of the term "student" to include certain health science education students; authorizing dollar-to-dollar matches of funds for certain contributions by persons or entities to an institution or an institution's direct-support organization; revising the authorized uses of LINE funds; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 1009.8962, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.8962 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE)
Fund.-

(1) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Act."

(2) Recognizing that the state has a persistent and growing shortage in nursing and other related health science professions shortage, it is the intent of the Legislature to

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26 address this critical workforce need by incentivizing
27 collaboration between nursing education and health science
28 education programs and health care partners through the
29 establishment of the LINE Fund. This fund is intended to meet
30 local, regional, and state workforce demand by recruiting
31 faculty and clinical preceptors, increasing the capacity of
32 high-quality nursing education programs and health science
33 education programs, as outlined in the State Board of
34 Education's career and technical education health science
35 curriculum framework, and increasing the number of nursing
36 education and health science education program graduates who are
37 prepared to enter the workforce.

38 (3) As used in this section, the term:

39 (a) "Health care partner" means a health care provider as
40 defined in s. 768.38(2).

41 (b) "Institution" means a school district career center
42 under s. 1001.44; a charter technical career center under s.
43 1002.34; a Florida College System institution; a state
44 university; an independent nonprofit college or university
45 located and chartered in this state and accredited by an agency
46 or association that is recognized by the database created and
47 maintained by the United States Department of Education to grant
48 baccalaureate degrees; or an independent school, college, or
49 university with an accredited program as defined in s. 464.003
50 which is located in this state and licensed by the Commission

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51 for Independent Education pursuant to s. 1005.31, or an
52 institution authorized under s. 1009.521, which has a nursing
53 education program that meets or exceeds the following:

54 1. For a certified nursing assistant program, a completion
55 rate of at least 70 percent for the prior year.

56 2. For a licensed practical nurse, associate of science in
57 nursing, and bachelor of science in nursing program, a first-
58 time passage rate on the National Council of State Boards of
59 Nursing Licensing Examination of at least 75 percent for the
60 prior year based on a minimum of 10 testing participants.

61 (c) "Student" means a person who is a resident for tuition
62 purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21 and enrolled at an institution
63 in a nursing education program or a health science education
64 degree or certificate program that is part of the State Board of
65 Education's career and technical education health science
66 curriculum framework at an institution.

67 (4) The LINE Fund shall be administered by the Board of
68 Governors for state universities and the Department of Education
69 for all other institutions.

70 (5) Subject to available funds, for every dollar
71 contributed to an institution by a health care partner, the fund
72 shall provide a dollar-to-dollar match to the participating
73 institution. Subject to available funds, the fund may also
74 provide a dollar-to-dollar match to an institution for every
75 dollar contributed to an institution or its direct-support

76 organization by a person or an entity that does not meet the
77 definition of a health care partner, provided the contribution
78 is used pursuant to paragraph (6) (a). Contributions from health
79 care partners shall receive priority when awarding matching
80 funds to institutions.

81 (6) (a) Funds may be used for student scholarships,
82 recruitment of additional faculty and students, equipment,
83 facility renovation or remodeling, and simulation centers to
84 advance high-quality nursing education and health science
85 education programs throughout the state.

86 (b) Funds may not be used for the construction of new
87 buildings.

88 (7) (a) To participate, an institution must submit a timely
89 and completed proposal to the Board of Governors or Department
90 of Education, in a format prescribed by the Board of Governors
91 or Department of Education, as applicable.

92 (b) The proposal must identify a health care partner
93 located and licensed to operate in the state or other person or
94 entity whose monetary contributions will be matched by the fund
95 on a dollar-to-dollar basis.

96 (8) The Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
97 applicable, must review and evaluate each completed and timely
98 submitted proposal according to the following minimum criteria:

99 (a) Whether funds committed by the health care partner or
100 person or entity will contribute to an eligible purpose.

101 (b) How the institution plans to use the funds, including
102 how such funds will be utilized to increase student enrollment
103 and program completion.

104 (c) If the person or entity is a health care partner, how
105 the health care partner will onboard and retain graduates.

106 (d) How the funds will expand the institution's nursing
107 education or health science education programs to meet local,
108 regional, or state workforce demands. If applicable, this shall
109 include advanced education nursing programs and how the funds
110 will increase the number of faculty and clinical preceptors and
111 planned efforts to utilize the clinical placement process
112 established in s. 14.36.

113 (9) (a) Each institution with an approved proposal shall
114 notify the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
115 applicable, upon receipt of the ~~health care partner~~ provided
116 funds identified in the proposal. The Board of Governors or
117 Department of Education, as applicable, shall release grant
118 funds, on a dollar-for-dollar basis, up to the amount of funds
119 received by the institution.

120 (b) Annually, by February 1, each institution awarded
121 grant funds in the previous fiscal year shall submit a report to
122 the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
123 applicable, that demonstrates the expansion as outlined in the
124 proposal and the use of funds. At minimum, the report must
125 include, by program level, the number of additional nursing

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126 education and other health science education students enrolled;
127 if scholarships were awarded using grant funds, the number of
128 students who received scholarships and the average award amount;
129 and the outcomes of students as reported by the Office of
130 Reimagining Education and Career Help pursuant to s.
131 14.36(3)(1).

132 (10) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations and
133 the State Board of Education shall adopt rules to administer the
134 fund, establish dates for the submission and review of
135 proposals, award funds, and other regulations and rules
136 necessary to implement this section.

137 **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.