

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Linking Industry to Nursing
3 Education Fund; amending s. 1009.8962, F.S.; revising
4 the Legislative intent for the Linking Industry to
5 Nursing Education (LINE) Fund; revising the definition
6 of the term "health care partner"; authorizing the
7 inclusion of nonmonetary contributions to institutions
8 for purposes of proposals for LINE Fund matching
9 funds; requiring monetary contributions to receive
10 priority in the award of matching funds; revising the
11 authorized uses of awarded funds; requiring proposals
12 for participation in the fund to be submitted by
13 specified persons; providing allowable nonmonetary
14 contributions; providing requirements for the
15 acceptance of nonmonetary contributions as health care
16 matching funds; prohibiting a proposal to participate
17 in the fund from being comprised solely of nonmonetary
18 contributions; revising the criteria the Board of
19 Governors and the Department of Education must use to
20 review proposals; requiring grant funds awarded based
21 on nonmonetary contributions to be based on such
22 contribution's fair market value; authorizing the
23 Board of Governors and the Department of Education to
24 provide multiyear awards under certain circumstances;
25 providing notification requirements for such awards;

26 providing an effective date.

27

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

29

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

32 1009.8962 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE)
 33 Fund.—

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

36 (2) Recognizing that the state has a persistent and
 37 growing nursing shortage, it is the intent of the Legislature to
 38 address this critical workforce need by incentivizing
 39 collaboration between nursing education programs and health care
 40 partners that contribute monetary or nonmonetary contributions
 41 through the establishment of the LINE Fund. This fund is
 42 intended to meet local, regional, and state workforce demand by
 43 recruiting faculty and clinical preceptors, increasing the
 44 capacity of high-quality nursing education programs, and
 45 increasing the number of nursing education program graduates who
 46 are prepared and licensed to enter the workforce.

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

48 (a) "Health care partner" means a health care provider as
 49 defined in s. 768.38(2) which is licensed to operate in this
 50 state.

51 (b) "Institution" means a school district career center
52 under s. 1001.44; a charter technical career center under s.
53 1002.34; a Florida College System institution; a state
54 university; an independent nonprofit college or university
55 located and chartered in this state and accredited by an agency
56 or association that is recognized by the database created and
57 maintained by the United States Department of Education to grant
58 baccalaureate degrees; or an independent school, college, or
59 university with an accredited program as defined in s. 464.003
60 which is located in this state and licensed by the Commission
61 for Independent Education pursuant to s. 1005.31, or an
62 institution authorized under s. 1009.521, which has a nursing
63 education program that meets or exceeds the following:

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

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

71 (c) "Student" means a person who is a resident for tuition
72 purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21 and enrolled in a nursing
73 education program at an institution.

74 (4) The LINE Fund shall be administered by the Board of
75 Governors for state universities and the Department of Education

76 | for all other institutions.

77 | (5) Subject to available funds, for every monetary or
78 | nonmonetary contribution ~~dollar contributed~~ to an institution by
79 | a health care partner, the fund shall provide a dollar-to-dollar
80 | match to the participating institution to implement the
81 | activities outlined in the institution's approved proposal.
82 | Monetary contributions from health care partners shall receive
83 | priority when awarding matching funds to institutions.

84 | (6) (a) Funds may be used for student scholarships;;
85 | recruitment of additional faculty and preceptors; increasing
86 | program enrollment, program completion, and licensure
87 | examination passage rates; ; equipment;; ~~and simulation centers;~~
88 | and internships to advance high-quality nursing education
89 | programs throughout the state.

90 | (b) Funds may not be used for the construction of new
91 | buildings, but may be used to expand, retrofit, or upgrade
92 | existing facilities if the proposal will result in increased
93 | program enrollments or improved or modernized educational or
94 | simulation space for an institution's nursing education program
95 | students.

96 | (7) (a) To participate, an institution's president, chief
97 | administrative officer, or designee ~~institution~~ must submit a
98 | timely and completed proposal to the Board of Governors or
99 | Department of Education, in a format prescribed by the Board of
100 | Governors or Department of Education, as applicable.

101 (b) The proposal must identify a health care partner
102 located and licensed to operate in the state whose ~~monetary~~
103 contributions will be matched by the fund on a dollar-to-dollar
104 basis.

105 (c) Allowable nonmonetary contributions are limited to the
106 following:

107 1. The value of the donated use of health care partner
108 employees as nursing education program instructors or
109 preceptors.

110 2. The value of the donated use of a health care partner's
111 space or equipment by a nursing education program.

112 3. The value of donated educational or simulation
113 equipment.

114 4. Other similar quantifiable donated goods and services
115 deemed by the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
116 applicable, to be good faith contributions that support the
117 goals of the LINE Fund.

118 (d) To accept nonmonetary contributions as health care
119 matching funds, the applicant and Board of Governors or
120 Department of Education, as applicable, must quantify the fair
121 market value of the contribution in dollars and certify that the
122 proposed contribution directly supports the goals of the LINE
123 Fund outlined in subsection (2).

124 (e) A proposal may not be comprised solely of nonmonetary
125 contributions.

126 (8) The Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
 127 applicable, must review and evaluate each completed and timely
 128 submitted proposal according to the following minimum criteria,
 129 where applicable:

130 (a) Whether monetary and nonmonetary contributions ~~funds~~
 131 committed by the health care partner will contribute to an
 132 eligible purpose.

133 (b) How the institution plans to use the funds or
 134 nonmonetary contribution, including how such funds or
 135 nonmonetary contribution will be utilized to increase student
 136 enrollment and program completion.

137 (c) How the health care partner will onboard and retain
 138 graduates or otherwise improve the likelihood that graduates
 139 will successfully join the state or local workforce.

140 (d) How the funds or nonmonetary contribution will be used
 141 to expand the institution's nursing education programs to meet
 142 local, regional, or state workforce demands. If applicable, this
 143 shall include advanced education nursing programs and how the
 144 funds or nonmonetary contribution will increase the number of
 145 faculty and clinical preceptors and planned efforts to utilize
 146 the clinical placement process established in s. 14.36.

147 (9) (a) Each institution with an approved proposal shall
 148 notify the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
 149 applicable, upon receipt of the health care partner provided
 150 funds or nonmonetary contribution identified in the proposal.

151 The Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
152 applicable, shall release grant funds, on a dollar-for-dollar
153 basis, up to the amount of funds or the fair market value of the
154 nonmonetary contribution received by the institution, including
155 notifications made on a rolling or periodic basis.

156 (b) If deemed to meet the long-term goals of the LINE
157 Fund, the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
158 applicable, may, but are not required to, award funds for an
159 approved proposal for up to 2 academic years immediately
160 following the academic year within which the initial approval is
161 granted. If the Board of Governors or Department of Education,
162 as applicable, approves a multiyear award to an institution, it
163 must notify the recipient that the award amount in subsequent
164 years is subject to a LINE Fund appropriation and the continued
165 notification of the health care partner's contribution to match
166 the multiyear award of state funds.

167 (c) ~~(b)~~ Annually, by February 1, each institution awarded
168 grant funds in the previous fiscal year shall submit a report to
169 the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
170 applicable, that demonstrates the expansion as outlined in the
171 proposal and the use of funds. At minimum, the report must
172 include, by program level, the number of additional nursing
173 education students enrolled; if scholarships were awarded using
174 grant funds, the number of students who received scholarships
175 and the average award amount; and the outcomes of students as

176 reported by the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help
177 pursuant to s. 14.36(3)(1).

178 (10) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations and
179 the State Board of Education shall adopt rules to administer the
180 fund, establish dates for the submission and review of
181 proposals, award funds, and other regulations and rules
182 necessary to implement this section.

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