



## **HB 4137 - Loan Forgiveness Program - \$2.5 million additional funding**

### **Summary**

HB 4137 will help alleviate rural Oregon's primary care shortage by retaining physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants after graduation and providing more opportunities for Oregonians pursuing a career in primary care. In addition, it will create jobs and stimulate economies in rural Oregon.

### **The Program**

- The Loan Forgiveness program is the only primary care provider incentive program for health professional students that focuses exclusively on rural areas, where access to primary care is most difficult to obtain.
- The program calls for each participating school to establish a rural track that insures every student in the program undergoes a curriculum dedicated to the unique healthcare needs of rural Oregonians.
- The Loan Forgiveness was developed with the distinct intent of using all of Oregon's health professional training programs from across the state, public and private, to solve a problem that has a profound effect on our health care system.

### **The Need**

- With this increase in funding, the program will be able to assist approximately 35 additional students per year – students that have committed to serving in rural Oregon.
- With 600,000 uninsured Oregonians on the path to coverage, now is the time to give the Primary Care Loan Forgiveness program the boost it needs to help ensure we have the workforce to meet the future primary care needs of rural Oregonians.

### **The Benefits**

- A lower debt load will encourage medical, physician assistant, and nurse practitioner students to go into primary care. This program specifically incentivizes providers to put down roots in rural Oregon, where they are needed most.
- According to a 2013 study by the Oregon Healthcare Workforce Institute, on statewide average one physician contributes 12 direct jobs to the state's labor market. In some rural counties, up to 40 direct jobs. This bill is a job creator.

Oregon Healthcare Workforce Institute. (2013). *The economic impact of oregon's physicians*.  
<http://www.oregonhwi.org/resources/documents/FinalPhysicianEconomicContributionsReport12013.pdf>

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