General Assembly **Substitute Bill No. 6979**

January Session, 2025

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AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PHYSICIAN RECRUITMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 19a-88 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(b) Each person holding a license to practice medicine, surgery, podiatry, chiropractic or naturopathy shall, annually, during the month of such person's birth, register with the Department of Public Health, upon payment of the professional services fee for class I, as defined in section 33-182*l*, plus five dollars. Each person holding a license to practice medicine or surgery shall pay five dollars in addition to such professional services fee. Such registration shall be on blanks to be furnished by the department for such purpose, giving such person's name in full, such person's residence and business address and such other information as the department requests. On and after January 1, 2026, each person holding a license to practice medicine who has retired from the profession may renew such license. The fee for such license renewal shall be ten per cent of the professional services fee for class I, as determined in accordance with section 33-182*l*, or ninety-five dollars, whichever is greater. Any such license provided by the department at a reduced fee pursuant to this subsection shall indicate that the practitioner is retired.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) For the purposes of subsection (b) of section 19a-88 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, the Commissioner of Public Health shall, not later than January 1, 2026, adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes. Such regulations shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) a definition of "retired from the profession" as that term applies to physicians, (2) procedures for licensed physicians, who have retired from the profession, to return to active employment, and (3) appropriate restrictions upon the scope of practice for such physicians who are retired from the profession, including restricting the license of such physicians to the provision of volunteer services without monetary compensation.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) Any person licensed pursuant to section 20-13 of the general statutes, who is retired from the profession and whose license has become void pursuant to section 19a-88 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, may apply for reinstatement of such license pursuant to the provisions of section 19a-14 of the general statutes. The Commissioner of Public Health shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement the provisions of this section. Such regulations shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) a definition of "retired from the profession" as that term applies to physicians, and (2) (A) eligibility requirements consistent with the provisions of subdivision (6) of subsection (a) of section 19a-14 of the general statutes, and (B) application procedures relating to license reinstatement. The commissioner may impose any conditions or restrictions upon the scope of practice of a physician whose license is reinstated pursuant to the provisions of this subdivision, including, but not limited to, conditions or restrictions relating to the provision of volunteer services without monetary compensation.

Sec. 4. Subsections (a) to (c), inclusive, of section 20-11b of the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, each person licensed to practice medicine and surgery under the provisions of section 20-13 who provides direct patient care services shall maintain professional liability insurance or other indemnity against liability for professional malpractice. The amount of insurance which each such person shall carry as insurance or indemnity against claims for injury or death for professional malpractice shall not be less than five hundred thousand dollars for one person, per occurrence, with an aggregate of not less than one million five hundred thousand dollars.

(b) Each insurance company which issues professional liability insurance, as defined in subdivisions (1), (6), (7), (8) and (9) of subsection (b) of section 38a-393, shall on and after January 1, 1995, render to the Commissioner of Public Health a true record of the names and addresses, according to classification, of cancellations of and refusals to renew professional liability insurance policies and the reasons for such cancellation or refusal to renew said policies for the year ending on the thirty-first day of December next preceding.

(c) A person subject to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section shall be deemed in compliance with such subsection when providing primary health care <u>or behavioral health care</u> services at a clinic licensed by the Department of Public Health that is recognized as tax exempt pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any successor internal revenue code, as may be amended from time to time, provided: (1) Such person is not compensated for such services; (2) the clinic does not charge patients for such services; (3) the clinic maintains professional liability insurance coverage in the amounts required by subsection (a) of this section for each aggregated forty hours of service or fraction thereof for such persons; (4) the clinic carries additional appropriate professional liability coverage on behalf of the clinic and its employees in the amounts of five hundred thousand dollars per occurrence, with an aggregate of not less than one million five hundred thousand dollars; and (5) the clinic maintains total professional liability coverage of not less than one million dollars per occurrence with an annual aggregate of not less than three million

dollars. Such person shall be subject to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section when providing direct patient care services in any setting other than such clinic. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to relieve the clinic from any insurance requirements otherwise required by law.

Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Public Health shall establish, within available appropriations, a student loan repayment program for health care providers who provide primary care and behavioral health services in the state. For the purposes of this section, "primary care" means the medical fields of family medicine, general pediatrics, primary care, internal medicine, primary care obstetrics or primary care gynecology, without regard to board certification. The commissioner may adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement the provisions of this section, including, but not limited to, establishing eligibility criteria and obligations of program participants.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	*October 1, 2025*	19a-88(b)
Sec. 2	*October 1, 2025*	New section
Sec. 3	*October 1, 2025*	New section
Sec. 4	*October 1, 2025*	20-11b(a) to (c)
Sec. 5	*from passage*	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:
In Sections 2 and 3, "as amended by this act" was inserted after "section 19a-88 of the general statutes" for clarity; in Section 3, "section" was inserted before "19a-14" for consistency with standard drafting conventions, and "scope of a practice" was changed to "scope of practice" for statutory consistency.

PH *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*