

Senate Bill No. 21

CHAPTER 203

An act relating to the University of California.

[Approved by Governor September 6, 2013. Filed with
Secretary of State September 6, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 21, Roth. University of California: UC Riverside Medical School.

Existing provisions of the California Constitution establish the University of California as a public trust under the administration of the Regents of the University of California. The University of California system includes 10 campuses, which are located in Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz.

The bill would request the School of Medicine at the University of California, Riverside, to develop a program consistent with its mission, in conjunction with the health facilities of its medical residency programs, to identify eligible medical residents and to assist those medical residents to apply for physician retention programs, including, but not limited to, the Steven M. Thompson Physician Corps Loan Repayment Program.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) California's supply of primary care physicians is below what is considered sufficient to meet patient needs. In the rapidly growing and ethnically diverse area of inland southern California, the shortage is particularly severe, with just 40 primary care physicians per 100,000 patients, which is far fewer than the recommended range of 60 to 80 primary care physicians per 100,000 patients. Furthermore, Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans are vastly underrepresented in the physician workforce.

(b) California lags substantially in the number of medical school seats per capita, having just 17.3 seats per 100,000 persons, compared to the United States average of 31.4 seats per 100,000 persons, according to statistics published by the Association of American Medical Colleges.

(c) According to the California HealthCare Foundation, 72 percent of California's 58 counties have an undersupply of primary care physicians, with primary care physicians making up just 34 percent of California's physician workforce.

(d) The University of California, Riverside, (UCR) has had a longstanding two-year medical education program and its independent four-year school of medicine has received preliminary accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the nationally recognized accrediting body for medical education programs leading to M.D. degrees in the United States and Canada. When this new four-year medical school opens in August 2013, it will become the first new public medical school in California in more than 40 years.

(e) This community-based medical school with a public mission to expand and diversify the region's physician workforce and to improve the health of people living in inland southern California has made a commitment to underserved patient populations.

(f) There are two principal determinants of where a physician practices: (1) where he or she grew up, and (2) where he or she completes residency training following medical school graduation.

(g) The UCR medical school has strategies to capitalize on both of these factors. Among these strategies are all of the following: (1) developing student pipeline programs that inspire more young people in the region to pursue careers in medicine and other allied health professions and to recruit them to the UCR medical school; (2) utilizing a holistic review of medical school applicants that takes into account diverse life experiences in addition to academic performance; (3) teaching a curriculum that emphasizes key competencies for primary care medicine, including wellness and prevention, evidence-based medicine, and chronic disease management; (4) creating new residency training programs in primary care and those short-supply specialties that are most needed in inland southern California; and (5) continuing UCR's commitment to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of talented students, faculty, and staff from historically excluded populations who are currently underrepresented in medical education and the practice of medicine.

(h) As a further incentive for medical students to choose primary care specialties, the UCR medical school has developed an innovative "loan-to-scholarship" program, is actively raising nonstate funds to expand that program, and is educating students and graduates about existing public and private physician recruitment and retention programs, including, but not limited to, the Steven M. Thompson Physician Corps Loan Repayment Program established pursuant to Article 5 (commencing with Section 128550) of Chapter 5 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the Health and Safety Code.

(i) The appropriation of state funding in the annual Budget Act, in accordance with Section 16 of Assembly Bill 94 of the 2013–14 Regular Session, to the UCR medical school will add more physicians to underserved areas in inland southern California and help California meet the objectives of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148) in the short term and the long term by expanding the physician workforce.

SEC. 2. The School of Medicine at the University of California, Riverside, is requested to develop a program, consistent with its mission, in conjunction with the health facilities of its medical residency programs, to identify eligible medical residents and to assist those medical residents to apply for physician retention programs, including, but not limited to, the Steven M. Thompson Physician Corps Loan Repayment Program established pursuant to Article 5 (commencing with Section 128550) of Chapter 5 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the Health and Safety Code.

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