

December 20, 2011

The Honorable Mike Miller

The Honorable Michael Busch

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway

The Honorable Sheila Hixson

Re: HB 758, Ch. 360, Acts of 2011 – Task Force on Funding a Green Technology, Life Science, and Health Information Technology Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP)

Dear Mr. President, Mr. Speaker and Chairs:

The Governor's Workforce Investment Board respectfully requests an extension in the filing of the report mandated by House Bill 758, Chapter 360, Acts of 2011, which is due on or before December 31, 2011. Staffing for the task force is provided by the Governor's Workforce Investment Board. The Board needs to conduct additional research and wishes to receive feedback from other states in order to provide a more thorough and comprehensive report. Therefore, we ask that the filing report date be extended to on or before January 30, 2011.

We appreciate your consideration. If you should have any questions, please contact me or Jill Porter, Legislative Director, at 410-230-6009.

Sincerely,



Lynn M. Reed
Executive Director

cc: Victoria Gruber
Christine Jones
Chris Godwin
David Stamper
Betty Anderson



**REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE BILL 758**

**TASKFORCE ON FUNDING GREEN TECHNOLOGY, LIFE SCIENCE,
AND
HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAM**

**SUBMITTED
BY THE
GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

June 2012

TASK FORCE OVERVIEW

Charge

During the legislative session of 2011, Delegate Keiffer Mitchell introduced legislation (H.B. 758) charging the Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB) with convening a task force to research and make recommendations on sources of funding for Loan Assistance Repayment Programs (LARP) for individuals pursuing careers in green technology, life sciences, and health information technology. The LARP would assist graduates who have earned a degree in a field relating to green technology, life sciences or health information technology from an institution of higher education in the State in repayment of any federal or state higher education loan.

Structure

H.B. 758 required that the task force be comprised of the following members:

- A member of the Maryland Senate
- A member of the Maryland House of Delegates
- The Secretary of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, or his designee
- A member of the GWIB
- A representative of community colleges in the State
- A representative of the biotechnology industry
- A representative of the Maryland Clean Energy Center
- A representative of the Maryland State & District of Columbia AFL-CIO
- A representative of the SEIU Maryland and District of Columbia State Council

Members were appointed by the Governor and the General Assembly to complete a term of service that concludes upon the completion of a report outlining the Task Force's recommendations. The Task Force is staffed by the Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB).

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

▪ Delegate Keiffer Mitchell, Jr. State of Maryland	▪ I. Katherine Magruder Executive Director, Maryland Clean Energy Center
▪ Senator Katherine Klausmeier State of Maryland	▪ Fred Mason, Jr. President, Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO
▪ Alexander M. Sanchez Secretary, Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation	▪ Ronald Petersen President, Johns Hopkins Health System
▪ Danielle Copeland Regional Director, Training and Upgrading Fund SEIU Maryland and D.C. State Council	▪ Mary Pulcinella Executive Director, U.S. Green Building Council, Maryland Chapter
▪ Jerome T. Countee, Jr. Director of Workforce Development, Prince George's Community College	▪ Renee M. Winsky Maryland Biotechnology Industry

WHAT ARE LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAMS?

Loan Assistance Repayment Programs (LARPs) have emerged as a solution for relieving the educational debt burden of some graduates. LARPs provide loan repayment or forgiveness, lower interest rates on loans, or postponed payment of loans to graduates entering specific types of employment. Some LARPs place limits on the amount of income a recipient can earn while participating in such a program, and most require a service obligation from the recipient. There are various types of LARPs, administered by schools, as well as federal and state governments, which provide debt relief to graduates. The number of these programs has begun to increase recently, but still does not meet most of the need of many individuals who would like to work in specific industries.

LARP FUNDING

Existing state LARPs are funded through a variety of sources, including legislative appropriations, private donations, and private foundations. Funding sources for individual programs will vary, depending on a number of state-specific factors.

State Legislative Appropriations:

This term refers to funding appropriated from a state's general fund by a state's legislature to support loan repayment/forgiveness.

Private Donors:

In some states, private donors, including professional organizations or their individual members, and entities such as underserved communities or local governments, provide a portion of the funding for LARPs.

Private Foundations:

Philanthropic nonprofit organizations may be a source of funding for LARPs. The types of foundations vary, from large foundations with a national scope to smaller local and/or family-funded foundations. Funding a statewide LARP may appeal to a local or statewide foundation, as the funding will impact the local community in which the foundation operates.

HISTORY OF LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAMS IN MARYLAND

In 1988, Maryland's General Assembly passed LARP legislation to encourage doctors and lawyers to work in Maryland in critical positions with lower salaries. This was the first state legislation adopted to provide loan repayment assistance to public service lawyers. The program was created to provide educational loan repayment assistance to lawyers providing service to low-income or underserved residents. The legislation authorized the State Scholarship Administration of the Maryland Higher Education Commission to administer the program. The General Assembly appropriated \$100,000 to support the program during its first year.

The impetus for Maryland's program was the publication of the Maryland Legal Services Corporation study titled, *Action Plan for Legal Services to Maryland's Poor*. The report found, in part, that salaries of lawyers employed by programs providing civil legal services to the poor fall far below salaries of lawyers in private practice or government. Law graduates interested in working for legal services programs could not afford to do so, especially if they had substantial law school loans. The report suggested law school loan repayment as a solution to the problem. A coalition of representatives from legal services organizations, law schools, law students and the private bar, cooperating with supportive legislators, worked to create the Maryland program.

Since its creation, the program has expanded to include those who work in other public service fields designated as priority fields by the State legislature, such as nurses, social workers, physical therapists and other fields of employment where there are shortages of practitioners providing services to low-income or underserved residents.

In 2001, the program was re-named the Janet L. Hoffman LARP, in memory of Janet L. Hoffman, the first and longest-serving lobbyist for Baltimore City in Annapolis. The program, which is still supported by funds from the General Assembly, makes annual grants to recipients.

What follows is a summary of Maryland's Loan Assistance Repayment Programs.

Name/Administered By	Inaugural Year	Funded By/Annual Funding Amount	Award Amount / Number of Awards Per Year / Renewal / Service Obligation	Who May Apply	Eligible Field of Employment /Eligibility Requirements
Maryland Dent-Care Loan Assistance Repayment program (MDC-LARP) Administered By: DHMH	2000	Funded By: State Legislature Annual Funded Amount: Dependent on state budget FY12=\$356,100 Outcomes: Since inception, total amount funded/ number of participants: \$3,280,000/47 dentists (DHMH statistics); \$4,430,439/120 dentists (MHEC statistics)	Award Amount: Up to \$23,740 per year for a maximum of 3 years Number of Awards Per Year: 5 Renewal: Award may be renewed for up to two years Service Obligation: Applicant must sign a promissory note stating that s/he will remain employed full-time as a dentist. S/he must agree to maintain at least 30% of patient population as Maryland Medical Assistance Program (MMAP) recipients.	Practicing Dentists	Dentistry Eligibility Requirements: Applicant must be a Maryland resident. S/he must have graduated from an accredited US dental school. S/he must have a valid unrestricted license to practice dentistry in Maryland and be employed full-time as a dentist in Maryland providing care to MMAP recipients. S/he must have outstanding eligible higher education loans. S/he cannot be in default on a loan nor have incomplete service obligations.
Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment program Primary Care Services (LARP-PCS)(Officially know as Janet L. Hoffman LARP-PCS) Administered by: DHMH	1991	Funded By: Maryland Board of Physicians and Federal HRSA funds Annual Funded Amount: \$500,000 (\$250,000 from each source) Outcomes: Since inception, total amount funded/number of participants: \$7,025,432 / 217 recipients	Award Amount: Between \$25,000 and \$30,000 per year, depending on length of service commitment. Recipient's total award may not exceed \$120,000 Number of Awards Per Year: 22; 10 newly awarded this year. Renewal: The applicant may reapply for this award after completion of the service obligation.	Primary Care Physicians	General Internal Medicine, Family Practice, General Pediatrics, Obstetrics/Gynecology, and General Psychiatry Eligibility Requirements: The applicant must be a resident of Maryland at the time the service obligation begins. If the applicant is a physician, s/he must have a valid unrestricted license to practice medicine in Maryland and work in an approved underserved area in Maryland. If applicant is a medical resident, s/he must have at least one year remaining in a residency program specializing in primary care. S/he must have an outstanding eligible higher education loan. S/he cannot be in default on a loan nor have incomplete service obligations.

Name/Administered By	Inaugural Year	Funded By/Annual Funding Amount	Award Amount / Number of Awards Per Year / Renewal / Service Obligation	Who May Apply	Eligible Field of Employment /Eligibility Requirements
<p>Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP) Administered By: MHEC</p>	<p>1988; amended 1994</p>	<p>Funded By: State Legislature Annual Funded Amount: Varies, dependent upon State budget FY12 = \$1,136,795 Outcomes: Since inception, total amount funded & number of participants ~ Data for 2001-2011: \$15,287,688/4,182 recipients</p>	<p>Award Amount: Dependent upon applicant's amount of educational debt. Number of Awards Per Year: 207 (2011) Renewal: The award may be renewed for a maximum of three years.</p>	<p>Maryland residents who provide public service in Maryland state or local governments or nonprofit agencies serving low-income or underserved residents.</p>	<p>Eligible Field of Employment: Lawyers, nurses, nurse faculty members, physical and occupational therapists, social workers, speech pathologists, physician assistants, and teachers (employment fields are revised annually). Eligibility Requirements: The applicant must have earned a degree from a Maryland college or from any law school, or a resident teacher certificate from the Maryland State Dept. of Education (MSDE). S/he must be employed full-time in state or local government or in a nonprofit organization in Maryland. The employer must help low income, underserved residents or underserved areas in the State. Applicant must have educational loans and may not be in default on a loan. His/her gross annual income may not exceed \$60,000. If employed as a nurse faculty member, gross annual income may not exceed \$75,000.</p>
<p>John R. Justice Grant Program Maryland Student Loan Repayment Program Administered By: MHEC</p>	<p>2011</p>	<p>Funded By: Federal Government Annual Funded Amount: \$144,000 (2011); \$144,328 (2012) Outcomes: Since inception, total amount funded / number of participants: \$288,328/36 recipients</p>	<p>Award Amount Per Participant: \$4,000 Renewal: The award may be renewed for a maximum of three years Service Obligation: Three years</p>	<p>Attorneys</p>	<p>Eligible Field of Employment: Public Defenders and Public Prosecutors Eligibility Requirements: The applicant must be a US citizen or eligible non-citizen with an outstanding balance on an eligible education loan, and be an attorney continually licensed to practice law in Maryland and a full-time employee of the state or local government who prosecutes criminal or juvenile delinquency cases, or full-time employee of a nonprofit organization who represents indigent persons in criminal or juvenile cases, or employed in Maryland as a federal defender.</p>

JANET L. HOFFMAN LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR PHYSICIANS

AWARDED FROM

1992 - 2012

Total LARP Awards: 172

Total ARRA LARP: 8

Currently active in program: 22 (including 6 ARRA)

Defaulter: 1 (in January 2010)

State Funding Only: 3

Award Began	Number Awarded	Number Denied	American Recovery & Reinvestment Act Awards
1992	3		
1993	2		
1994	2		
1995	4		
1996	11		
1997	7		
1998	8		
1999	9		
2000	11		
2001	11	11	
2002	10		
2003	19	6	
2004	3	8	
2005	7	14	
2006	8		
2007	7		
2008	11		
2009	13		
2010	10		2
2011	6		2
2012	10	4	4
Total	172		8

SNAPSHOT OF STATE LARPs

LARPs currently exist in at least 19 states including California, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funds the National Health Services Corps, which administers a LARP for primary care physicians, fourth-year medical students, dentists and psychiatrists.

Of the 19 states, 16 are funded solely by the state legislatures. Others receive a combination of funding from development funds, foundations, agency councils and professionals associations, state agencies, health care systems, educational institutions, private donors and grants, local municipalities, and employer partners.

As detailed on the previous pages, Maryland's LARPs have been funded mainly by the state legislature, with the exception of the Maryland Primary Services LARP, which is funded by the Maryland Board of Physicians, through licensure and re-licensure fees.

State	Funder	Funder	Federal Funder	Eligible Occupation	Contact	Additional Information	
24 States	State Bar Assoc.	Private Funders		Attorney	Tara Southwell, AVMA State Legislative & Reg. Dpmt., 847-285-6779		
National Health Services Corps			U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services	Primary Care Physicians & 4 th -Yr. students, dentists, psychiatrists	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services	42 yrs of funding; \$50,000 repayment for 2 yrs FT service	Retention rate = 68% over 5 yrs; 52% over 15 yrs
California	State Legislature	Licensure fees, Managed Care Administrative Fines & Penalties Fund, private donations & grants*	National Health Service Corps, HRSA	MD/DO, Dentist, Dental Hygienist, CNM, CP, LCSW, LPC, MFT, NP, PA, PNS, RN, LPN	California Health Professions Education Foundation		
Colorado	State Legislature	Colorado Health Foundation	HRSA, USDHHS	MD/DO, NP, CNM, PA, DH, CP, LCSW, PNS, LPC, MFT	Primary Care Office, 303-692-2582		
Iowa		Two Iowa universities & two private health care systems	HRSA, USDHHS	MD/DO, Dentist, Dental Hygienist, CNM, CP, LCSW, LPC, MFT, NP, PA, PNS	Iowa Bureau of Health Care Access		
Kansas	State Legislature	Rural Health Care Organization practice site	HRSA, USDHHS	MD/DO, Dentist, Dental Hygienist, CNM, CP, LCSW, LPC, MFT, NP, PA, PNS	Kansas Office of Primary Care		

State	Funder	Funder	Federal Funder	Eligible Occupation	Contact	Additional Information	
Kentucky	Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund	Kentucky Farm Bureau, Cattlemen's Foundation, Kentucky Proud, Kentucky Dairy Development Council, Kentucky Pork Producers, etc.	VMLARP, USDA, Nat'l. Inst. Of Food & Agriculture	Veterinarian, Vet. Technician & Technologist	Tara Southwell, AVMA State Legislative & Reg. Dpmt., 847-285-6779		
Louisiana				Veterinary Student	Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission		
Maryland (Janet L. Hoffmann)	State Legislature			Law student, Lawyer, Nurse, Nurse Faculty Member, PT, PT, LSW, Speech Pathologist, PA, Teacher	Maryland Higher Education Commission	Enacted by Legislature in 1988; amended 1994	207 currently awarded; FY12 funding = \$1,136,795
Maryland (Dent-Care)	State Legislature			Dentist	Dr. Harry Goodman, Office of Oral Health, DHMH	Funded since 2001; each participant receives up to \$71,000	3-yr program; 5 new dentists per yr = 15 dentists; FY12 funding = \$356,100 30% of patient base must be Medicaid
Maryland (John R. Justice)	State Legislature			Public defenders and Prosecutors	Maryland Higher Education Commission	Funded since 2011	

State	Funder	Funder	Federal Funder	Eligible Occupation	Contact	Additional Information	
Massachusetts	Commonwealth of Mass.	Bank of America, Neighborhood Health Plan, Blue Cross, Blue Shield Foundation of Mass., Partners HealthCare		MD/DO, NP	Mass. League of Community Health Centers (Primary Care Assoc.)		
Michigan	State Legislature, Community Mental Health/Dept. of Corrections	Local matching funds (50% employer funds)	HRSA, USDHHS	MD/DO, Dentist, Dental Hygienist, CNM, CP, LCSW, LPC, MFT, NP, PA, PNS	Michigan Dept. of Community Health		
Minnesota	Office of Rural Health & Primary Care		National Health Service Corps, HRSA	MD/DO, DD, NP, CNM, PA, DH, CP, LCSW, PNS, LPC, MFT	Debra Jahnke, Office of Rural Health, 651-201-3845		
Montana	State Legislature	Fees charged to medical students	National Health Service Corps, HRSA	MD/DO, Dentist, Dental Hygienist, CNM, CP, LCSW, LPC, MFT, NP, PA, PNS	Montana Primary Care Office		
Nebraska	State Legislature	Matching funds from approved loan repayment sites (any source), communities & local entities (e.g.: hospitals)		MD/OD, Dentists, CP, NP, PA, Mental Health Professionals, pharmacists, OT, PT	Nebraska Office of Rural Health		

State	Funder	Funder	Federal Funder	Eligible Occupation	Contact	Additional Information
New Mexico	Dedicated fund by State Legislature	Private contributions, receipts from participant repayment	National Health Service Corps, HRSA	MD/DO, PA, AAPN, allied health provider, podiatrist, optometrist, dentist, primary care medical student	New Mexico Office of Higher Education	
North Dakota	State Health Council	Matching funds from local community practice site		MD/DO, Dentist, NP, PA, CNM	North Dakota Dept. of Health, Office of Community Assistance	
North Dakota	State & Special funds through Legislature & State Health Council	Gifts, grants or donations (written in statute, none have ever been received)	VMLARP, USDA, Nat'l. Inst. Of Food & Agriculture	Veterinarian	Rose Nelson, North Dakota Dept. of Health rmnelson@nd.gov	
Oklahoma	State Legislature	100% matching funds from rural practice site		Family Practice & General Practice medical student, dentist	Oklahoma State Dept. of Health and Oklahoma Physician Manpower Training Commission	
Texas	State funds no longer available for LARP		National Health Service Corps, HRSA	Physicians	Texas Dept. of State Health Services, Primary Care Office	
Texas	State Legislature	Gifts, grants or donations	VMLARP, USDA, Nat'l. Inst. of Food & Agriculture	Veterinarian	Tara Southwell, AVMA State Legislative & Reg. Dpmt., 847-285-6779	

State	Funder	Funder	Federal Funder	Eligible Occupation	Contact	Additional Information	
Vermont	State Legislature		National Health Service Corps, HRSA	MD/DO, NP, PA, CNM, Psychiatrist, Dentist, Nurse Educators	Vermont Area Health Education Center		
Vermont	State Legislature, State Emergency Board, Joint Fiscal Committee		VMLARP, USDA, Nat'l. Inst. Of Food & Agriculture	Veterinarians	Tara Southwell, AVMA State Legislative & Reg. Dpmt., 847-285-6779		
Washington	State Legislature		HRSA, USDHHS	MD/DO, Dentist, Dental Hygienist, CNM, NP, RN, Pharmacist, PA	Washington Higher Education Coordinating Council		
Wyoming	State Legislature if matching funds (25%) are available	Matching from county, city, vet clinic, animal care facility, state agency, univ. lab or vet. assoc.	VMLARP, USDA, Nat'l. Inst. Of Food & Agriculture	Veterinarian	Tara Southwell, AVMA State Legislative & Reg. Dpmt., 847-285-6779		
Wyoming	State Legislature if matching funds (25%) are available	matching from county, city, school district, health care facility or association		Primary care physician, dentist, allied health professional	Office of Rural Health, Rural & Frontier Health Division, WDOH		
NOTE: Most health care and veterinary programs listed above require practices to have rural locations.							
34 states have a limited # of veterinarian LARPs thru the USDA							
* Includes individuals, private corporations, foundations, health plans and hospitals.							

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

Green technology, life sciences and health information technology are growth industries in Maryland's knowledge economy. Both green technology and health information technology are emerging industries, with green technology moving Maryland toward clean and efficient energy, resource protection and restoration, and sustainable communities, and health information technology opening up the efficient capture, exchange and study of information. New technologies are also changing life sciences, with innovative discoveries and insights being made every day. All three occupations are in need of well-trained employees; however, the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations' (DLLR) labor force statistics exposes a gap between the number of job openings and the number of skilled workers available to take advantage of career opportunities in these growth industries.

Green Technology

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "green technology" careers are becoming big business; especially, as the global market expands and more companies enhance their commitment to environmental sustainability. Careers in green technology are expected to grow much faster than the average job market as a whole, translating to about a 20 percent increase per year, at least until 2018.

Today, with computers used in almost all industries and in practically every career function from manufacturing and production to office finance and retail operations, most of the demand for environmental sustainability jobs will be for green technology professionals with backgrounds in information systems to oversee software and hardware installation, system management and upgrades, programming and network and security management. Other green technology careers which might not come to mind include fulfilling the global demand for interpreters, translators and instructors in other languages, such as Arabic and Mandarin; particularly, as environmental sustainability initiatives become more competitive and interconnected among competing multinationals and countries. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) also suggests that a majority of green technology jobs will require a minimum of a bachelor's degree. But training for many other support or technician green technology positions can be completed with a two-year associate degree or certificate from a community college.

Life Sciences

Maryland is home to more than 400 life science businesses that employ over 11,000 residents. Among these are premier research and clinical institutions such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Johns Hopkins Hospital and the University of Maryland Medical System. Johns Hopkins University and the University System of Maryland are among the top tier of research universities, and have spun off many start-up companies that are having great success. DLLR projects that more than 20,000 life, physical and social scientists will be needed between 2008 and 2018.

Numerous incubators and research parks with ties to major universities exist across the State, promoting collaboration, innovation and commercialization. Maryland has the highest concentration of Ph.D.s working in life sciences. Additionally, the State is providing funding to the life sciences industry through innovative programs like InvestMaryland, which creates a public-private partnership to fuel venture capital investment in Maryland bioscience companies.

Approximately one-third of Maryland's higher education enrollments, or 100,000 students, are in degree programs that directly feed the bioscience industry. It is imperative that these graduates stay within the State to staff the myriad life sciences organizations. A LARP will help mitigate graduate attrition with educational loans after they receive their degrees, and provide incentive for them to live and work in Maryland.

Health Information Technology

Maryland stands at the forefront of a nationwide movement to utilize advancements in information technology to improve the quality and efficiency of individualized healthcare. Central to this effort are federal and state programs, built upon a nascent health information technology (HIT) framework, to encourage the rapid transfer of patient records from paper to electronic/digital format, known as Electronic Health Records (EHRs). Healthcare providers, working in coordination with government, non-profits, the private sector and academia, will utilize the information contained in EHRs to improve clinical decision making and patient care.

Moving to an EHR environment in Maryland is a work in progress. According to the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC), hospitals in Maryland have been the quickest to adapt to the concept, with 80 percent reporting EHR adoption, while long-term care facilities report nearly 40 percent adoption to some form of EHR. Predictably, individual physicians' offices have been slowest to convert, with only 20 percent of primary care practices reporting adoption, due in large part to technical and financial constraints. Federal regulations and financial incentives are likely to help precipitate the transition to EHRs among those who have been slowest to adopt. Ironically, federal mandates for adoption have also led to a higher than normal retirement rate among older practitioners who are required to convert, yet do not foresee recouping the substantial costs in a reasonable timeframe. As thousands of healthcare providers convert to EHRs over the next several years, the implications for the evolving HIT industry are significant.

The HIT industry includes the CIOs and information technology staffs of major hospitals, payor organizations, institutions, educational facilities, and public health organizations, as well as information technology managers working as vendors or contractors to a range of healthcare providers. The people who work in this field have been at the forefront of the healthcare industry's efforts to implement Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), computerize business functions, transfer records to digital and electronic formats, improve training opportunities, advance communication systems within the healthcare industry, and utilize technology to support clinical decision-making. As the innovators and implementers in an industry undergoing a major transition, HIT professionals represent an important and growing part of the life sciences community in Maryland.

It is difficult to estimate the size of the HIT workforce in Maryland, in part because the sector includes more than just those people who are working in computer jobs within the healthcare industry (estimated at 1,600 workers). As IT functions have become increasingly integrated into many healthcare occupations, it is arguable that some of these positions should be counted as HIT jobs. In addition, it is unclear how many people work for information technology firms exclusively on projects related to healthcare. It is estimated that these IT positions actually represent a significant portion of the HIT workforce. Further data collection could help to quantify the size and scope of the sector.

CONCLUSION

Many states successfully fund and administer LARPs, some supported by federal funds. These programs are generally in the healthcare field, providing physicians, dentists, nurses, clinical social workers, physician assistants and veterinarians with the means of serving the neediest populations. Attorneys who serve the indigent also may obtain LARPs. All programs require a commitment from recipients to remain in certain positions for a specified amount of time.

Some Maryland programs have been in place for decades, while others are recent additions. Funding comes from many sources, including the Legislature, state licensure boards, and the federal government, and award amounts vary. The common thread for all programs is the need for additional funding which would allow more practitioners to serve more Marylanders.

Green technology, life science, and health information technology are growing occupations in Maryland. Providing educational debt relief to those who have obtained the training necessary to enter these professions allows them to pursue positions that will benefit both Maryland residents and themselves.

TASK FORCE OUTCOMES

The Task Force convened in 2012 at the Governor's Workforce Investment Board offices. The purpose of the meeting was to review the draft report that was prepared and distributed prior to the meeting, as well as to develop a set of recommendations around the feasibility on sources of funding for a green technology, life sciences, and health information technology loan assistance repayment program.

Delegate Keiffer Mitchell provided opening remarks and his thoughts related to sponsorship of H.B. 758. Additionally, the purpose and charge of the legislation was provided; and Task Force members were also given an overview of the draft report including the history of LARPs in Maryland and the 19 other states that administer LARPs.

Discussion by the Task Force was wide-ranging, covering the LARPs now available and their usefulness to eligible students. One strong point made by the group was that LARPs used as incentives to move students into the needed fields of green technology, life sciences and health information need to be introduced to them at the end of their second year or beginning of their

third year of educational pursuit. With this timing, students can take the LARP into account when searching for their first post-graduate position.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force deliberated on several options for funding LARPs as incentives to encourage students to enter the green technology, life sciences and health information technology fields, including employer tax credits (similar to those used to incentivize employers who hire unemployed workers), builders' fees, and bonds. However, given the current economic environment which does not lend itself to a full State appropriation, the Task Force recommends a hybrid approach to funding LARPs, blending some State funding with private partnerships seen in other state LARPs. This private funding would include:

- **Foundations**
Many states have funded healthcare LARPs with foundation funding, either non-profit foundations or the foundation side of major insurers;
- **Private Association**
Similar to the funding of physician LARPs by the Board of Physicians;
- **Employer Match**
Just as hospitals and local governments support healthcare workers, employers eager to hire well-trained graduates could match funding provided by the State.

The Task Force has completed its charge, but believes that this work is important enough in nature to warrant continued deliberation, advancing the work on LARPs in order to reduce the gap between the need for well-trained employees in the green technology, life sciences and health information technology and the burden of educational costs on new graduates.