

# THE ALLIED HEALTH WORKFORCE DIVERSITY ACT



What is it?  
*(H.R. 3320/S. 1679)*

by: Justine Ramos (AOTA/MAOT Rep)

# THE BILL

The bipartisan Allied Health Workforce Diversity Act (H.R. 3320/S. 1679) introduced by Reps. Bobby Rush (IL-01) and Markwayne Mullin (OK-02) in the House, and Sens. Bob Casey (PA), and Lisa Murkowski (AK) in the Senate,

“To amend title VII of the Public Health Service Act to authorize assistance for increasing workforce diversity in the professions of physical therapy, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, audiology, and speech-language pathology, and for other purposes.”

# A H W D

Provides grant funding to academic programs in (OT, PT, RT, SLP, & Audiology) to increase opportunities for individuals who are from underrepresented backgrounds, including students from racial and ethnic minorities



# BACKGROUND

- Pushes Allied Health Programs to strengthen and expand the use of evidence-based strategies shown to increase the recruitment, enrollment, retention, and graduation of students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds.
- These strategies include
  - *outreach to the community*
  - *the creation or expansion of mentorship and tutoring programs*
  - *the provision of scholarships and stipends to students.*
- AHWD is modeled after the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Diversity program, which has successfully increased the percentage of racial and ethnic minorities pursuing careers in nursing.

# THIS INCLUDES...

- **Providing student scholarships or stipends, including for—**
  - completion of an accelerated degree program
  - completion of an associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree program
  - entry by a diploma or associate's degree practitioner into a bridge or degree completion program
- **Providing assistance for completion of prerequisite courses or other preparation necessary for acceptance for enrollment in the eligible entity;**
- **Carrying out activities to increase the retention of students in their program**

# PROMOTES ACCOUNTABILITY

- The Secretary may require a program to report to the Secretary concerning the annual admission, retention, and graduation rates for eligible individuals in programs of the recipient leading to a degree
- **What if a program has falling diversity rates?**
  - Programs must provide the Secretary with plans for immediately improving such rates.
- **What if diversity rates continue to fall**
  - Programs will be ineligible for continued funding under this section if it fails to improve the rates within the 1-year period beginning on the date such plan is implemented

# WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THESE SERVICES?

- Must be a member of a class of persons who are **underrepresented in the given profession** including but not limited to
  - racial or ethnic minorities
  - low-income students/individuals
  - individuals with disabilities
  - individuals who have an individualized education program
- **AND** demonstrates financial need

# HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT?

1. Take 2 minutes to write a  
letter to your legislatures

AND/OR

2. Call Members of Congress to  
co-sponsor this bill

<https://tinyurl.com/AHWD2022>

**LINK IN BIO**



# ENDORISING ORGANIZATIONS

- American Physical Therapy Association •  
American Occupational Therapy Association •  
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- American Academy of Audiology • American  
Association for Respiratory Care • American  
Academy of Physical Therapy • National  
Association of Black Physical Therapists •  
Asian/Pacific Occupational Therapy Association
- National Black Occupational Therapy Coalition •  
Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for  
Diversity • Multicultural, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Network • Association of University Centers on  
Disability