

The Public Health Preparedness Workforce Development Act of 2008
One-Page Description

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

- To create incentives for students and graduates in public health disciplines to enter the public health workforce.

PROBLEM THE BILL ADDRESSES

- Public health doctors and nurses, epidemiologists, health care educators and administrators work to protect us from communicable diseases, prevent environmental hazards and chronic diseases, and help communities prepare for disasters.
- **Leading experts agree that we do not have enough trained public health workers today—and will have even fewer tomorrow—if we do not act to increase the pipeline soon.**
 - The public health workforce is aging rapidly, and schools of public health are not generating sufficient numbers of graduates to replace retiring public health workers.
 - Many public health graduates pursue careers that are more lucrative than joining the public health workforce.

WHAT THE BILL DOES

- **Scholarships:** Creates a scholarship program for public health students in return for their service in public health professions after graduation.
- **Loan Repayment:** Establishes a program to help eligible public health workers re-pay student loans incurred during pursuit of public health degrees.
- **State and Local Loan Repayment:** Provides grants for State and local entities to set up their own loan repayment programs for public health workers.
- **Mid-Career Training Scholarships:** Authorizes scholarships for public health professionals to receive mid-career training and education in public health preparedness.
- **Public Health Opportunities Catalogue:** Directs the Office of Personnel Management to create an online catalogue of public health positions available in the Federal Government.
- **Academic Health Departments:** Authorizes a competitive grant program for partnerships between public health schools and State or local public health departments that establish academic health departments.

NEXT STEPS

- For more information, or to co-sponsor the Public Health Preparedness Workforce Development Act, contact Ben Gutman (ben.gutman@mail.house.gov; 5-2446) or Sam Stefanki (sam.stefanki@mail.house.gov; 5-7165) in Representative Matsui's office.