

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2024

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Legislative Document

No. 2267

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H.P. 1457

House of Representatives, March 14, 2024

**An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission  
Regarding Foreign-trained Physicians Living in Maine to Support  
International Medical Graduates in Securing Employment**

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Reported by Representative PERRY of Calais for the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services pursuant to Resolve 2023, chapter 93, section 8.

Reference to the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services suggested and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 26 MRSA c. 30** is enacted to read:

3 **CHAPTER 30**

4 **ASSISTANCE TO INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES IN SECURING**  
5 **EMPLOYMENT**

6 **§2141. Definitions**

7 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms  
8 have the following meanings.

9 **1. Department.** "Department" means the Department of Labor.

10 **2. International medical graduate.** "International medical graduate" means an  
11 individual who has received a degree of doctor of medicine or its equivalent from a legally  
12 chartered medical school outside the United States recognized by the World Health  
13 Organization and who has lived in this State for at least 12 months.

14 **3. Medical licensing exam.** "Medical licensing exam" means the United States  
15 Medical Licensing Exam or its successor examination.

16 **4. Sponsoring institution.** "Sponsoring institution" means any of the 4 hospitals in the  
17 State accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education on January  
18 1, 2024.

19 **§2142. International medical graduates assistance program**

20 The department shall contract with a 3rd-party entity to provide an assistance program,  
21 referred to in this section as "the program," to international medical graduates wishing to  
22 reestablish their medical careers in this State.

23 **1. Program requirements.** The program must be designed to:

24 A. Review the background, education, training and experience of program participants  
25 in order to recommend appropriate steps to enable program participants to integrate  
26 into the State's health care workforce as physicians or to pursue alternative health care  
27 careers;

28 B. Provide technical support and guidance to program participants through the  
29 credential evaluation process, including preparation for the medical licensing exam and  
30 other applicable tests or evaluations;

31 C. Provide scholarships or access to scholarships or funds for certain program  
32 participants to help cover or offset the cost of the medical licensure process, including  
33 the costs of the credential evaluation process, preparing for the medical licensing exam  
34 and other applicable tests or evaluations, the medical residency application process and  
35 other costs associated with returning to a career in health care;

36 D. In partnership with community organizations working with international medical  
37 graduates and on a voluntary basis, develop:

1 (1) A roster of international medical graduates interested in entering the State's  
2 health care workforce as physicians for the purpose of program planning and  
3 administration, including developing summary reports that include the aggregate  
4 number and distribution, by geographic location and specialty, of international  
5 medical graduates in the State; and

6 (2) A roster of international medical graduates seeking alternative health care  
7 careers for the purpose of supporting those international medical graduates in their  
8 integration into nonphysician health care roles; and

9 E. Provide guidance to international medical graduates in applying for medical  
10 residency programs or other pathways to licensure.

11 **2. Eligibility; limitations.** The department shall determine, with input from  
12 stakeholders and after considering relevant research on the needs of the workforce and of  
13 international medical graduates in this State, eligibility criteria for participation in the  
14 program, any limits on the amount of direct services provided to an individual program  
15 participant and any caps on funding available under the program.

16 **§2143. International medical graduates clinical readiness program**

17 **1. Clinical readiness program; contract.** The department shall contract with an  
18 accredited medical school in this State or a sponsoring institution to develop, implement  
19 and administer a clinical readiness program to assist international medical graduates in  
20 building the skills necessary to become successful medical residents in the United States  
21 medical system.

22 **2. Minimum requirements.** At a minimum, the clinical readiness program under  
23 subsection 1 must include at least the following elements:

24 A. A mechanism for processing and assessing program applications;

25 B. A program curriculum that provides inpatient and outpatient training opportunities  
26 combined with community and classroom-based components to prepare program  
27 participants to match into and succeed in a United States medical residency program;  
28 and

29 C. A system to assess the clinical readiness of program participants to serve in a United  
30 States medical residency program and to grant program participants a credential of  
31 clinical readiness upon successful completion of the program.

32 **§2144. Funding**

33 The International Medical Graduate Assistance Enterprise Fund is created within the  
34 department as an enterprise fund for the deposit of any funds advanced for initial operating  
35 expenses and any funds received from any public or private source to support the programs  
36 established under this chapter. The fund may not lapse but must be carried forward to carry  
37 out the purposes of this chapter.

38 **Sec. 2. Finance Authority of Maine pilot program for loan assistance to**  
39 **international medical graduates.** For the purpose of providing financial assistance for  
40 an international medical graduate to attend an approved education program in this State in  
41 order to join the State's health care workforce, the Finance Authority of Maine shall, on a  
42 pilot basis until December 31, 2027, provide a loan program for international medical  
43 graduates residing in this State who are unable to qualify for any existing federal or state

1 education loan programs. The authority shall determine the financial and other eligibility  
2 requirements for an international medical graduate to qualify for financial assistance under  
3 the program and shall develop an alternative to the federal Free Application for Federal  
4 Student Aid form for use by an international medical graduate to apply for financial  
5 assistance under the program to attend one of the State's public or private postsecondary  
6 educational institutions. For the purposes of this section, "international medical graduate"  
7 has the same meaning as in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, section 2141, subsection  
8 2.

9 **Sec. 3. Educational programs for alternative health care careers for**  
10 **international medical graduates.** The Office of Policy Innovation and the Future  
11 shall, to the extent funding is available and until December 31, 2027, coordinate with  
12 appropriate educational institutions to develop programs for international medical  
13 graduates residing in this State to gain entry into and complete educational programs in  
14 alternative health care careers, such as physician assistant, nurse or nurse practitioner  
15 programs, to ensure that the State is effectively incorporating immigrants into the State's  
16 health care workforce and communities and to strengthen the State's economy. For the  
17 purposes of this section, "international medical graduate" has the same meaning as in the  
18 Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, section 2141, subsection 2.

### 19 SUMMARY

20 This bill implements certain recommendations of the Commission Regarding Foreign-  
21 trained Physicians Living in Maine and is being reported out by the Joint Standing  
22 Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services pursuant to Resolve  
23 2023, chapter 93, section 8. The committee is reporting out the bill for the sole purpose of  
24 having a bill printed that can be referred to the committee for an appropriate public hearing  
25 and subsequent processing in the normal course and has not taken a substantive position on  
26 the bill. The committee is taking this action to ensure clarity and transparency in the  
27 legislative review of the proposals contained in the bill.

28 The bill does the following.

29 1. It directs the Department of Labor to contract with a 3rd-party entity to provide an  
30 assistance program and a clinical readiness program for international medical graduates.

31 2. It directs the Finance Authority of Maine to provide a loan program on a pilot basis  
32 for the purpose of providing financial assistance to attend an approved education program  
33 in this State in order to join the State's health care workforce, to international medical  
34 graduates residing in this State who are unable to qualify for any existing federal or state  
35 education loan programs.

36 3. It directs the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future to coordinate with  
37 appropriate educational institutions to develop programs for international medical  
38 graduates residing in this State to gain entry into and complete educational programs in  
39 alternative health care careers, such as physician assistant, nurse or nurse practitioner  
40 programs, to ensure that the State is effectively incorporating immigrants into the State's  
41 health care workforce and communities and to strengthen the State's economy.