

HB 1946: Creating the Washington Health Corps Behavioral Health Scholarship Program

WHAT DOES HB 1946 DO?

- Creates a college level behavioral health conditional scholarship program for students pursuing behavioral health professions
 - Scholarship recipients are required to work in an underserved or rural area for a certain amount of time.
 - Increases accessibility to behavioral health professional education and addresses behavioral health workforce shortage in underserved areas.
-

Talking Points

- Behavioral health professions across the state are suffering ongoing issues of staff turnover, recruitment, and retention.
- In 2022, the vacancy rate for behavioral health professionals with advanced degrees in WA was an astounding 29%, with a turnover rate of 32% according to a survey by the Washington Council for Behavioral Health.
- The lack of diversity in the behavioral health workforce makes it difficult for marginalized communities to find culturally responsive and language appropriate care.
- Behavioral Health scholarship will increase the number of students seeking these degrees, leading to a more robust and diverse workforce.
- Increases access to behavioral health professionals in underserved and rural communities due to the service requirement.

CONTACT:

ANNA NEPOMUCENO (PUBLIC POLICY DIRECTOR)
ANEPOMUCENO@NAMIWA.ORG
MICHAEL TRANSUE (CONTRACT LOBBYIST)
CMJTRANSUE@TRANSUE.ONMICROSOFT.COM



Washington