

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
BUDGET HEARING

STATE CAPITOL
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
HOUSE CHAMBER

PENNSYLVANIA HIGHER EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE AGENCY

TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2022
1:00 P.M.

BEFORE :

HONORABLE STANLEY SAYLOR, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE MATTHEW BRADFORD, MINORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE LYNDA SCHLEGEL-CULVER
HONORABLE TORREN C. ECKER
HONORABLE JONATHAN FRITZ
HONORABLE KEITH J. GREINER
HONORABLE DOYLE HEFFLEY
HONORABLE JOHNATHAN D. HERSHEY
HONORABLE R. LEE JAMES
HONORABLE JOHN A. LAWRENCE
HONORABLE ZACHARY MAKO
HONORABLE NATALIE MIHALEK
HONORABLE TIMOTHY J. O'NEAL
HONORABLE CLINT OWLETT
HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER B. QUINN
HONORABLE GREG ROTHMAN
HONORABLE LOUIS C. SCHMITT, JR.
HONORABLE MEGHAN SCHROEDER
HONORABLE JAMES B. STRUZZI, II
HONORABLE JESSE TOPPER
HONORABLE RYAN WARNER
HONORABLE JEFF C. WHEELAND
HONORABLE DAVID H. ZIMMERMAN
HONORABLE AMEN BROWN

*Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*

1 BEFORE (continued):

2 HONORABLE ELIZABETH FIEDLER
3 HONORABLE MANUEL GUZMAN
4 HONORABLE PATTY KIM
5 HONORABLE EMILY KINKEAD
6 HONORABLE STEPHEN KINSEY
7 HONORABLE LEANNE KRUEGER
8 HONORABLE KYLE J. MULLINS
9 HONORABLE BENJAMIN V. SANCHEZ
10 HONORABLE PETER SCHWEYER
11 HONORABLE JOE WEBSTER

12 NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

13 HONORABLE MARK GILLEN
14 HONORABLE SHERYL DELOZIER
15 HONORABLE MARY ISAACSON

16 COMMITTEE STAFF PRESENT:

17 DAVID DONLEY
18 REPUBLICAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
19 RITCHIE LAFAVER
20 REPUBLICAN DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
21 ANNE BALOGA
22 DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
23 TARA TREES
24 DEMOCRATIC CHIEF COUNSEL

25 *Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

I N D E X

TESTIFIERS

* * *

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
ELIZABETH MCCLLOUD VICE PRESIDENT FOR STATE GRANTS & SPECIAL PROGRAMS, PHEAA.....	6
JAMES H. STEELEY PRESIDENT, PHEAA.....	11
NATHAN HENCH SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS, GUARANTY & STRATEGY, PHEAA.....	50

SUBMITTED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

* * *

(See submitted written testimony and handouts
online.)

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION OF INFORMATION

* * *

PAGE	LINE	PAGE	LINE	PAGE	LINE
46	22	48	13		

P R O C E E D I N G S

* * *

1
2
3 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: For this
4 afternoon's Appropriations hearings, we will have
5 testifiers from PHEAA, our Pennsylvania Higher
6 Education Assistance Agency.

7 And testifying today will be: James
8 Steeley, President; Nathan Hench, Senior Vice
9 President for Public Affairs; and Elizabeth
10 McCloud, Vice President for State Grants and
11 Special Programs.

12 I don't believe I've missed anybody that
13 will be testifying. So at this time, I invite
14 you, the three of you, to rise and raise your
15 right hand to be sworn in as we begin our
16 hearing.

* * *

17
18 (Whereupon, the testifiers were sworn en
19 masse.)

* * *

20
21 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: You may be
22 seated.

23 And this afternoon, we'll begin with the
24 lady from Northumberland County, Ms. Culver.

25 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman.

2 Thank you for all of you being here
3 today.

4 I just, for years, we've heard about
5 nursing shortages. And I think the pandemic
6 exacerbated the situation and highlighted it.
7 And we see nursing shortages from our hospitals
8 to our nursing homes to our rehab centers to
9 Hospice to home nursing care and private duty
10 nursing care, which actually, clogs up the system
11 because hospitals can't discharge to one of those
12 places. And then we have the bed situation going
13 on.

14 It just has been a really difficult time.
15 But in response to this issue, the General
16 Assembly created a loan forgiveness program for
17 nurses in Pennsylvania using a portion of the
18 Commonwealth's COVID relief money. And in
19 September of last year, PHEAA unveiled the
20 student loan forgiveness for nurses in PA,
21 proving to be what we thought a very popular
22 program, but probably more popular than any of us
23 probably anticipated.

24 Initially, it was funded with \$5 million.
25 And then we all added an additional \$15 million,

1 for a total of \$20 million for the program.

2 Can you briefly describe how the program
3 is working and how the operation of the program
4 is progressing?

5 MS. MCCLLOUD: Certainly. Thank you --

6 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: And if you could
7 just pull -- I can see it's not close enough to
8 you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Yes, these
10 microphones, as we have to remind our testifiers,
11 are not omnidirectional. Get them as close as
12 you can and --

13 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: It's -- if you're
14 very uncomfortable, then you know you're close
15 enough.

16 MS. MCCLLOUD: Is that good?

17 Hopefully you can hear me now. Okay.
18 Good.

19 well, thank you for that question. So
20 yes, so the Student Loan Relief for Nurses
21 Program was created this fall. And PHEAA was
22 asked to administer that to provide student loan
23 relief to nurses and encourage them to remain in
24 the profession during what, as you had pointed
25 out, has been a very challenging time, so that we

1 have the nursing workforce that we need to
2 continue addressing the Commonwealth's health
3 needs, particularly related to the pandemic, as
4 we move forward. And interest has been extremely
5 strong in that program.

6 So PHEAA opened up an application window
7 at the end of December, which was open for two
8 months. So that just closed on March 1st. And
9 while we're still finalizing entering the last
10 few applications into our system, I can tell you
11 that we've had over 20,000 applications for that
12 relief program.

13 So the program is structured in such a
14 way that a nurse who is eligible to participate
15 and is selected could receive up to \$7,500 in
16 loan relief. Twenty million dollars sounds like
17 a lot, but when you divide that by \$7,500, that
18 comes out to 2,666 nurses, if every nurse has a
19 full \$7,500 in qualifying student loan debt
20 that's outstanding.

21 And so clearly, with 20,000 applications,
22 the demand for the program exceeds available
23 funding at this point, but we'll continue moving
24 forward with administering the program over the
25 coming months with the hopes of starting to get

1 loan relief payments out to the servicers for
2 those nurses' loans starting in the second half
3 of the summer.

4 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: So you answered
5 part of my next question, is \$20 million enough?
6 And clearly the answer is no.

7 How much would you estimate additional
8 that we would need to satisfy all the demand from
9 nurses?

10 MS. MCCLLOUD: Well, you know, it's hard
11 for us to say exactly how much outstanding
12 student loan debt exists for the nurses who
13 applied during that two-month window. We're
14 still processing applications. But assuming that
15 they all have the maximum amount that the program
16 covers, that would be in excess of \$150 million
17 of qualifying student loan debt. And that is for
18 the nurses who applied during that two-month
19 window.

20 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Okay. All right.
21 Thank you. That's all the questions I have.

22 MS. MCCLLOUD: Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Thank you,
24 Mr. Chairman.

25 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks

1 the lady and recognizes the lady from Allegheny,
2 Ms. Kinkead.

3 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: Thank you,
4 Mr. Chairman.

5 Thank you all for joining us today.

6 I wanted to talk a little bit about how
7 it is that you guys sort of serve the students in
8 need and identify them. Obviously, right now,
9 the PHEAA grant is at its highest amount in the
10 program's history, but at the same time, we know
11 that college costs are at their highest levels.

12 So how far does a PHEAA grant go for the
13 average student?

14 And how has the program kept up with
15 inflation?

16 MS. MCCLLOUD: Thank you, Representative.

17 So the first part of your question had to
18 do with how we determine the need that students
19 show to qualify for the Pennsylvania State Grant
20 Program. And the way that we measure that is
21 using information that a student submits on the
22 FAFSA, which is a Federal form, the Free
23 Application for Federal Student Aid. That
24 collects income and asset information for
25 students and their household, and it calculates

1 what's called an expected family contribution.
2 And we use that same need analysis formula for
3 the State Grant Program, so that we can ensure
4 that grant dollars are assisting students with
5 the largest amount of need.

6 The other part of your question had to do
7 with how much of a student's need is being
8 covered by the program and how that's kept up
9 with inflation. And so what I can share with you
10 is that in the short term, this year's maximum PA
11 State grant, which is \$5,000, it's the highest
12 amount in the history of the program for a
13 single-year award, and it's meeting a little bit
14 more of the average student's tuition and fees
15 than the prior year award did.

16 So it's meeting -- to be specific, it's
17 meeting 13.7 percent of the average tuition and
18 fees. And there's a chart on page 7 of the
19 briefing book that we shared with the Committee
20 members today that gives you a little bit of the
21 recent history of the percentage and fees being
22 met. But that's one part of the story.

23 The longer story around that question has
24 to do with the second highest award students
25 received in the history of the program, which was

1 in the 2007-8 academic year.

2 During that award year, students received
3 \$4,700 for the maximum award amount. And if that
4 amount was adjusted for inflation since 2007-8,
5 the current award for this upcoming year would be
6 \$6,160. So we're not there yet. There's still
7 room to catch up in meeting an inflation
8 adjustment value for students, but certainly, the
9 \$5,000 this year was a step in the right
10 direction.

11 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: So to pivot to a
12 different topic. You guys have announced that
13 you're going to be leaving the Federal loan, I
14 guess, business if you will. And so that is
15 going to cause a decrease in your staffing, and
16 I'm wondering if you can talk a little bit about
17 what your plans are to ensure that the folks that
18 you're going to have to let go as a result of
19 that have a soft landing.

20 MR. STEELEY: Thank you. Thank you,
21 Representative.

22 You are correct. We are exiting the
23 Federal student loan servicing business. It's a
24 business that PHEAA entered into back in 2009 on
25 the heels of the financial crisis, and also

1 coupled with the end of the Federal Family
2 Education Loan Program, which really was the
3 center of PHEAA's business activities for the
4 first 50 years of the Agency.

5 In terms of impacted employees, we're
6 doing a number of things. Our Board in September
7 approved a retention incentive, which is offered
8 to all the front-line employees, you know, think
9 of the call center agents, the people that know
10 they're directly impacted because they work in
11 that line of business. And for our union-covered
12 employees, it's \$2,500 for each of two -- up to
13 \$2,500 for each of two retention periods. So in
14 total, individuals could earn up to \$5,000 if
15 they stay through the ultimate work-through date,
16 which we'd anticipate being sometime later in the
17 summer, possibly into the fall.

18 For employees that are not covered by
19 that, we also have a severance program in place
20 that provides two weeks of pay for every year of
21 service, capped at 16 weeks, and with a floor of
22 six weeks, as well as Cobra coverage and
23 outpatient services. So we're doing a lot, I'll
24 say, financially to soften it.

25 But then what we're also doing is, you

1 know, the employees that are impacted by this
2 have a unique set of skills. They're also
3 federally cleared. And what's proven to be one
4 of the big bottlenecks in student loan servicing
5 the last couple years is the Federal clearance
6 process. So having trained, cleared employees is
7 a valuable commodity, particularly with today's
8 remote work environment.

9 So we're working with servicers that are
10 staying in the business to try to match up and
11 make sure our employees are aware of
12 opportunities with those servicers. There's been
13 a few individuals that have already accepted and
14 moved. You know, the tricky thing, while we're
15 working with them, is ideally, we'd like to work
16 together so that they finish with PHEAA one day
17 and then they start with another servicer the
18 next day. And they would also be eligible for
19 these retention incentives, as well.

20 REPRESENTATIVE KINSEY: Thank you.

21 Mr. Chairman, can I have one follow-up
22 question?

23 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Ever so brief,
24 but yes.

25 REPRESENTATIVE KINSEY: Thank you.

1 The other loan servicers that you're
2 working with to try and direct your staff to, are
3 they in Pennsylvania or are they outside the
4 State?

5 MR. STEELEY: They are not in
6 Pennsylvania.

7 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: Okay.

8 MR. STEELEY: The other loan servicer
9 that was located in Pennsylvania also notified
10 the Federal government that they did not want an
11 extension.

12 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: Okay. So
13 inherently, we're losing those folks to outside
14 state opportunities?

15 MR. STEELEY: We are, with the caveat
16 that many of the individuals, particularly the
17 call center agents, will likely have the ability
18 to work remote.

19 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: Okay. Thank
20 you.

21 MR. STEELEY: So they may be still in
22 Pennsylvania. They'll just be working for an
23 entity in another state.

24 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: Thank you.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks
2 the lady and recognizes the gentleman from
3 Indiana, Mr. Struzzi.

4 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman.

6 Good afternoon. I'd like to ask a couple
7 of questions about the PA-TIP Program or the
8 Targeted Industry cluster Scholarship Program.

9 We're seeing a lot of changes in our
10 workforce, obviously a lot of unmet needs, people
11 kind of reinventing themselves. And programs
12 like this seem to really make a lot of sense
13 right now.

14 And just so people understand, these are
15 scholarships for programs that are two years or
16 less in study; is that correct? In specific
17 fields like agriculture, energy, et cetera, where
18 obviously there's a lot of demand right now.

19 So my question is, it was previously
20 funded at \$6.3 million. This year in the budget,
21 the Governor is proposing \$8.7 million, about a
22 \$2.4 million increase.

23 Can you give us an update on that
24 program?

25 MS. MCCLLOUD: Certainly. Yes. Thank

1 you, Representative Struzzi.

2 So as you mentioned, PA-TIP is helping a
3 specific set of students, students who are
4 studying programs that are shorter than two years
5 in length and therefore not eligible for the
6 Pennsylvania State Grant Program, and they're
7 programs in these specific occupational areas,
8 such as energy, such as the health programs of
9 study.

10 And so they're meeting specific workforce
11 needs for the Commonwealth. And what we have
12 found in the last few years is that the number of
13 eligible applicants for PA-TIP funds has exceeded
14 the available award funding. And so we've had to
15 decline to make awards to some students. And
16 we've administered the program on a first come,
17 first served basis in that regard. But PHEAA's
18 Board had requested additional funding for the
19 program for next year, specifically to be able to
20 fund all eligible applicants.

21 And the area where we have particularly
22 seen growth in the last couple of years is since
23 2019-20, when health professions were added as
24 one of the occupational clusters. And at this
25 point, about \$4 million of the awards for this

1 current year are going to students who are in
2 health -- eligible health programs of study. And
3 certainly, that's something that the Commonwealth
4 is benefitting from right now, to have students
5 studying in those fields. So we're hopeful to be
6 able to fund more of the applicants moving
7 forward.

8 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Sure.
9 Absolutely. There's definitely a need there.
10 And I think there's probably even a more
11 widespread need.

12 with that said, is \$2.4 million enough to
13 meet those needs?

14 MS. MCCLLOUD: We do anticipate that that
15 will be enough. And thank you for asking that.
16 That is based, however -- you know, there's
17 always a caveat with data, right?

18 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Right.

19 MS. MCCLLOUD: That is based on the demand
20 that we saw last year as a whole. And you know,
21 schools do reapply on an annual basis to have
22 specific programs of study that they offer be
23 eligible within the PA-TIP Program. And so
24 that's based on current school involvement and
25 programs of study that exist, but that list

1 changes every year.

2 So it's possible that there could be a
3 growth in demand if more funding is put into the
4 program.

5 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: And how do you
6 determine what are targeted industry clusters?

7 MS. MCCLLOUD: Sure. So PHEAA staff work
8 together with the Pennsylvania Department of
9 Labor & Industry, and we take a look at a tool
10 they pointed us towards at L&I. That's the
11 Pennsylvania In Demand Occupations List to align
12 what the occupations are, where there's a
13 shortage, and figure out how they map to programs
14 of study that are available at institutions.

15 And that review process is set to take
16 place every three years. The first revision to
17 eligible programs of study happened in going into
18 effect for the 2020-21 award year. And we're
19 looking at that list again later this calendar
20 year with a revised list of programs for 2023-24.

21 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Okay. So these
22 grants, they don't go to the individuals; they go
23 to the educational facility?

24 MS. MCCLLOUD: Well, they do go to the
25 individual students to cover their educational

1 costs at that institution where they are
2 studying.

3 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: So they are
4 administered through the tech schools or what
5 have you?

6 MS. MCCLLOUD: That's correct. Yes. So
7 we work together with the financial aid staff at
8 those schools to ensure that the students who
9 have submitted applications are meeting all of
10 the application requirements, some of which we're
11 able to check at PHEAA, but others, we need the
12 school's input on.

13 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: And do you find
14 that you have a greater percentage of high school
15 students applying for these or adults maybe
16 reinventing a new career path?

17 MS. MCCLLOUD: Right. So that's a very
18 good question. Thank you.

19 And what we have found is that PA-TIP
20 benefits a different population than the
21 Pennsylvania State Grant Program. PA-TIP
22 recipients, the average recipient is 29 years
23 old, is -- you know, so they're independent
24 students. They're students with typically lower
25 household income even than the income for the

1 average Pennsylvania State Grant recipient. So
2 it's helping a very specific population of
3 students who, as you mentioned, are likely
4 looking for a second career path and expanded
5 opportunities.

6 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Well, thank you.
7 I see that I'm almost out of time, but I think
8 there's great value in programs like this,
9 especially given our workforce needs right now.
10 So thank you for your time today.

11 MS. MCLOUD: Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks
13 the gentleman and recognizes the gentleman from
14 Berks, Mr. Guzman.

15 REPRESENTATIVE GUZMAN: Thank you very
16 much, Mr. Chair.

17 And thank you Team PHEAA for your time
18 this afternoon.

19 First, I just want to say that I was one
20 of those students at Kutztown University who
21 defended on PHEAA to achieve his piece of the
22 American dream. So I want to just thank you and
23 thank you all for what you do to help
24 Pennsylvanians all across the Commonwealth
25 achieve their piece of the American dream.

1 I don't know if I would have been able to
2 afford to go to college had it not been for the
3 grants that I received from PHEAA. So thank you
4 so much in that regard for changing my life and
5 changing my family's life, as well, and the
6 trajectory of that -- of that plan.

7 So you know, I want to talk about that
8 because, of course, as I was a student at
9 Kutztown University, I was also a student who
10 fell in that Act 101 Program category. And so
11 it's something that's near and dear to my heart,
12 of course. And of course, earlier on in the
13 pandemic, this body appropriated \$5 million of
14 CARES Act money to PHEAA to support that Act 101
15 Program, which by the way, helps provide services
16 to students who struggle economically and
17 educationally -- which I was one of those
18 students -- when they reach the campus in making
19 sure that they succeed. So obviously, that was a
20 one-time funding, but it was more than two times
21 the investment that this body has ever given you
22 all on an annual basis.

23 So my question is, how did colleges and
24 universities use this one-time funding for their
25 Act 101 programs?

1 MS. MCCLLOUD: Thank you, Representative
2 Guzman.

3 It's always great to hear from, you know,
4 a student, a former student who has benefited
5 from these programs, both the State Grant Program
6 and programs such as Act 101. And I appreciate
7 your asking that question.

8 So yes, so for 2020-21, Act 101 had that
9 additional \$5 million available from the Federal
10 CARES Act funds. And we worked closely with the
11 participating institutions. For that year, we
12 had 34 participating programs, and we worked
13 closely with the Act 101 Directors at each of
14 those programs to help them sort through what
15 their options were, because of course, the
16 Federal funds had limited usage that they could
17 be applied to.

18 And what we found happened most often was
19 that it enabled those schools to provide services
20 specifically to assist their students in
21 navigating the transition to a remote education
22 process during that academic year and ensuring
23 that they had access to Internet, that they had
24 the technology available to them that they
25 needed, that perhaps would have been out of reach

1 financially otherwise, that students had access
2 to electronic materials where necessary, and that
3 they also had increased academic advising support
4 and counselling services to help them navigate
5 their specific student needs while learning in a
6 different environment than what they had been
7 accustomed to in person, perhaps, in prior years.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GUZMAN: So in your
9 opinion, and on that same note, you know, what
10 are some of the other needs that the programs
11 have identified that we could, in this body,
12 support to help make students more successful?

13 MS. MCCLLOUD: Sure. Yes.

14 So the Act 101 Program, it does require
15 all of the institutions to provide some basic
16 tutoring and academic support services as well as
17 programing. Schools have a certain amount of
18 flexibility. So some institutions, for example,
19 put summer bridge programs in place to bring
20 their Act 101 students in a little bit earlier
21 and help them sort of get set up to learn best,
22 you know, to help them learn some new study
23 skills and that type of thing, but all of the
24 programs are required to be having touch points
25 with students throughout the year in a way to

1 ensure that students are staying on track, for
2 example.

3 So there's a wide variety of services
4 that can be helpful to students. And what the
5 Act 101 program does is it makes that funding
6 available to the institutions, so that they can
7 continue to support whichever tools within that
8 toolkit are the best fit or the best match with
9 their particular student population.

10 REPRESENTATIVE GUZMAN: Well, I can say
11 that Act 101 goes a long way towards helping poor
12 white, brown, and black folks achieve their piece
13 of the American dream. So whatever more funding
14 that this body can do to help support that
15 program, please count on my support individually
16 in that regard.

17 I do want to pivot though because I
18 appreciate Representative Struzzi bringing up the
19 TIP Program. And that's obviously something that
20 I'm very interested in. And in my opinion, you
21 know, over the last couple of weeks, you know,
22 we've been debating as a body, you know, our
23 desire to invest State resources wisely. And I
24 can't think of a better program than this in
25 terms of programs that deserve more funding.

1 So I mean, we're talking about graduation
2 rates in the seventies, eighties, ninety percent.
3 And so given all the challenges that we have --
4 in the very little time that I have left -- in
5 terms of our workforce development, trying to
6 find CDL drivers, trying to find more
7 manufacturing workers, if we were to invest more
8 money into this TIP Program, more money than the
9 Governor requested, are there other in-demand
10 fields that we could support in the Commonwealth
11 of Pennsylvania?

12 MS. MCCLOUD: well, I think that's a good
13 question. Thank you for asking that.

14 You know, when we are directed by the
15 General Assembly to take a fresh look at our
16 program, we do so. And so if additional funding
17 is put into a program, if that comes with
18 guidance from the General Assembly on the
19 direction that it's meant to be targeted, then,
20 you know, we would work within those parameters
21 obviously, but we don't necessarily need to have
22 those specific parameters built out around a
23 program because we do have the structure in place
24 where we work with the in-demand occupation list
25 to evaluate where there is a need within the

1 Commonwealth.

2 And certainly, we could look at that with
3 an expanded lens to come up with additional areas
4 where there are needs that aren't met within the
5 current clusters of health energy, manufacturing,
6 agriculture.

7 REPRESENTATIVE GUZMAN: Well, my time is
8 up, but one of the ways I think you guys can
9 immediately be helpful in this regard is if you
10 start funding some of these driving schools and
11 help people in our community obtain a CDL
12 driver's license. It would really go a long way
13 towards addressing that shortage that we have.

14 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

15 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks
16 the gentleman, recognizes the gentleman from
17 Lancaster, Mr. Zimmerman.

18 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Thank you,
19 Mr. Chairman.

20 And thank you to the leadership team for
21 being here and joining us. So my question is, in
22 the Governor's budget, he proposes a significant
23 increase in funding of the Ready to Succeed
24 Scholarship Program from \$5.55 million currently,
25 up to currently \$16.38 million for 2022 and '23.

1 So could you give us a bit of an update
2 on the current year?

3 And also, was the \$5.55 million spent
4 already? Or where's that at at this point?

5 MS. MCCLLOUD: Certainly. Yes. I'm happy
6 to share an update on the Ready to Succeed
7 Scholarship Program.

8 So this is a program that is still
9 relatively new, but in the time that it has
10 existed, the funding has never been sufficient to
11 meet the need of all potentially eligible
12 students. It's always been over-prescribed. So
13 the Ready to Succeed Scholarship Program, it was
14 created to assist middle income students and to
15 mitigate their student loan indebtedness.

16 And it's aimed towards a population of
17 students who were right around not qualifying for
18 the Pennsylvania State Grant Program or having
19 very minimal awards within the State grant
20 program. And so -- and just to give you an idea
21 of families that we're talking about, within the
22 State Grant Program, if you have a family of four
23 with one in college, around roughly \$75 to
24 \$85,000 in income is where students lose
25 eligibility. If there are two in the household

1 in college, maybe around \$100 to \$110,000 in
2 income.

3 And so the Ready to Succeed Scholarship
4 is filling in a little bit of the need for those
5 students that they don't have met through the
6 State Grant Program. So when PHEAA's Board
7 submitted a budget request to the Governor last
8 fall, what we did is we took a look at the prior
9 award year 2021-22, at that budget, and said,
10 okay, what would it take to fully fund all of the
11 potentially eligible students? And that's where
12 that \$16 million came from.

13 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Okay. So you
14 believe that would sufficiently fund the request?

15 MS. MCCLOUD: We do, yes.

16 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Okay. Good.

17 well, I think that really ends my
18 question, but I really appreciate, you know,
19 having a program like that that kind of meets a
20 need where, you know, you have some students that
21 might kind of fall through the cracks and so it's
22 a good -- it was a good move. So thank you for
23 doing that.

24 Thank you.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks
2 the gentleman, recognizes the gentleman from
3 Lehigh, Mr. Schweyer.

4 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: Thank you, Mr.
5 Chairman.

6 Good afternoon everyone.

7 Like pretty much everybody here who's
8 gone through the PHEAA System, I want to start by
9 thanking you for, you know, giving me a solid 15
10 years to pay off my student loans. That was very
11 nice. I appreciate that.

12 I will -- I'm happy to report they're all
13 paid off and I'm -- as a father of a 14-year-old
14 daughter, I look forward to picking up some new
15 ones in about four years. So but with that, I
16 represent the City of Allentown. And I only
17 represent the Allentown School District.

18 People know the statistics of Allentown.
19 We have -- 90 percent of our students are
20 students of color. And one of the things that
21 has been an ongoing concern that we heard from
22 Representative Guzman yesterday when he was
23 talking to our friends with the community
24 colleges, I believe, or with -- I think it was
25 PDE. It was a question of what is the definition

1 of a resident.

2 It is an ongoing concern for communities
3 like mine. And I'm curious to hear what exactly
4 -- what your opinion and perspective is on that
5 question.

6 MS. MCCLLOUD: Thank you for that
7 question.

8 I'm assuming that's in relation to the
9 Pennsylvania State Grant Program that we're
10 talking about here with the grant program?

11 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: Any and all --

12 MS. MCCLLOUD: Any and all, okay.

13 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: -- that is
14 controlled by the Commonwealth, not Federal
15 dollars.

16 And what is our definition of resident?

17 MS. MCCLLOUD: Sure. Yes, so within the
18 aid programs that PHEAA administers on behalf of
19 the Commonwealth, I can pretty broadly state that
20 in either statute or regulations around all of
21 those programs, that there is a requirement that
22 they be primarily benefitting students who are
23 residents of the Commonwealth.

24 And the way that that is defined, for
25 example, with the State Grant Program is that the

1 student needs to have lived in Pennsylvania as a
2 qualifying resident for the 12 months prior to
3 beginning their attendance at a post-secondary
4 level. And so the students being considered a
5 resident of the Commonwealth does look at their
6 eligibility from a citizenship standpoint, as
7 well.

8 And so that, you know, that is part of
9 how that is determined.

10 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: Is that a
11 decision made by the PHEAA Board or is that
12 something that, from your perspective, would have
13 to be addressed if the legislature were to choose
14 to, as a legislative initiative?

15 In other words, do you need our approval
16 for that or is that something that you could do
17 without our input?

18 MS. MCCLOUD: That would need to be a
19 legislative action. And I apologize for this,
20 but I would have to look at a program-by-program
21 basis to be able to answer for certain --
22 regarding the founding statute for some of the
23 smaller programs that we administer.

24 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: Okay. Fair
25 enough. And I appreciate that.

1 What about DOCA -- what about students
2 that are categorized as DACA?

3 MS. MCCLLOUD: Students who are
4 categorized as DACA would not be eligible for the
5 Pennsylvania State Grant Program at this point.
6 If a student, however, was born in the United
7 States and they have parents who are not U.S.
8 citizens, those students can be eligible within
9 the Pennsylvania State Grant Program.

10 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: And it is
11 PHEAA's perspective that even with the Federal
12 designation for this, relatively speaking small
13 group of Pennsylvania residents that might be
14 eligible for student loans, that DACA would also
15 have to be considered or approved by the
16 legislature and not the PHEAA Board?

17 MS. MCCLLOUD: There are certain areas
18 where Federal regulations or requirements around
19 aid programs don't match up with what is in
20 statute with Pennsylvania programs. And so that
21 would, you know, that would be an area where
22 there isn't a complete alignment between Federal
23 and State rules around student eligibility for
24 financial aid.

25 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: So is

1 Pennsylvania out of compliance with the Federal
2 government with regard to DACA students?

3 MS. MCCLLOUD: We aren't -- when it comes
4 to our State Grant Programs, we aren't under the
5 umbrella of Federal oversight.

6 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: Got you. Okay.
7 I appreciate that.

8 Has there been any conversation
9 internally in PHEAA about ways that the Agency
10 would be interested in assisting these students
11 even if they're -- even if there's a work-around
12 or something along those lines?

13 MS. MCCLLOUD: We've had students ask
14 questions about eligibility that -- so I'm aware
15 of those types of conversations. I'm not aware
16 of larger conversations that, perhaps, have
17 happened, but I'm not aware of them.

18 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: So nobody on
19 the Board ever said, hey, we're missing a group
20 of students?

21 That's fine. You don't have to answer
22 that. I won't put you in that spot. I'm just
23 going to say, it sounds like nobody ever once on
24 the Board said, hey, we might be missing a group
25 of students.

1 That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

2 I very much appreciate it. Again, on a
3 personal level, I've had -- I legitimately had
4 very good experiences as a PHEAA recipient of
5 both the grant programs and the subsidized and
6 unsubsidized student loans and hope that we have
7 an opportunity to change some of those policies.

8 Thank you very much.

9 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks
10 the gentleman and next recognizes the gentleman
11 from Washington, Mr. O'Neal.

12 REPRESENTATIVE O'NEAL: Thank you,
13 Mr. Chairman.

14 Thank you all for being here.

15 So in 2013, the Pennsylvania's Distance
16 Education Pilot Program allowed PHEAA to
17 incorporate online education into the State
18 Grant. Act 5 of 2018 fully integrated this and
19 made it a permanent -- a permanent change.

20 So first and foremost, how would you rate
21 the performance of the program of incorporating
22 it -- of incorporating distance education into
23 the PA State Grant, in terms of access to higher
24 education and workforce development?

25 MS. MCCLLOUD: Sure. Thank you for that

1 question.

2 So that has been a very seamless
3 transition, I would say, bringing eligibility to
4 the State Grant Program to students who are
5 primary enrolled online. The year -- the first
6 year where students didn't see any difference in
7 their grant eligibility, as a result of studying
8 wholly online at a headquartered school, was the
9 2019-20 academic year.

10 And so as you think about how things
11 unfolded coming out of that year, that was really
12 brilliant timing on the part of PHEAA's Board to
13 have moved to that point because then when we
14 moved into the 2020-21 academic year, award year,
15 and the bulk of students were seeing at least
16 some of their course work online, if not being
17 fully remote for their studies, the State Grant
18 Program was agile and right there with him.

19 So what we saw was that in the 2019-20
20 year, we had about \$12 million in State grant
21 awards going to students who were taking more
22 than 50 percent of their course work online. And
23 the following year, that \$12 million jumped up to
24 \$98 million out of the State grant awards that
25 were going to students who were more than

1 50-percent online. And that has been very
2 smooth.

3 REPRESENTATIVE O'NEAL: Well, that's good
4 to hear.

5 So really -- and you're kind of alluding
6 to my next question. The Act -- Act 5 actually
7 allowed PHEAA to actually reduce the grant
8 amounts if course work was only 50-percent
9 online.

10 Is that currently happening in the
11 current system?

12 Ms. MCCLOUD: So that is not happening
13 for the current year. And just to clarify, what
14 Act 5 did was it expanded the State Grant Program
15 to allow awards for the first time to students
16 who were more than 50 percent in online
17 enrollments, where they had had zero eligibility
18 before. And so that had an impact on the total
19 spending within the State Grant Program.

20 And so our Board had eased into that by
21 having awards the first year that, you know, were
22 about half of the in classroom awards, and then
23 the second year 75 percent, and then by the third
24 year of integration equal.

25 REPRESENTATIVE O'NEAL: Okay. So right

1 now, there's -- if you have 100 percent online,
2 you're getting the same State grant as if you're
3 100 percent in person.

4 MS. MCCLLOUD: So long as the student is
5 attending a school that is headquartered and
6 domiciled in Pennsylvania.

7 REPRESENTATIVE O'NEAL: Okay. And what
8 would be your view on expanding the program to
9 make more students eligible?

10 what -- are there any outcomes you would
11 expect from that? And what would you -- I mean,
12 I would assume you would need more resources to
13 do it.

14 Any thoughts along those lines?

15 MS. MCCLLOUD: Well, within the State
16 Grant Program, PHEAA's Board votes every spring
17 to set an awarding formula for the upcoming award
18 year. And they do that following advisement from
19 our State Grant Advisory Committee, which is
20 comprised of representatives from the various
21 sectors of higher education across the
22 Commonwealth, both from school staff and from
23 associations representing them.

24 So that's a, you know, a very thoughtful
25 deliberative process, where the Board is looking

1 at the demand for the program from a student
2 perspective, the need that students are showing
3 in the Commonwealth, the cost of their programs,
4 and so on. And there are various inputs within
5 the formula that can be adjusted to incorporate
6 students with different amounts of need or, you
7 know, look at their costs in different ways, all
8 sorts of different ways that that can be
9 considered.

10 And so that's something that's evaluated
11 on an annual basis. And there's -- there is
12 always room to address additional funding with
13 additional head count if asked to do so by the
14 General Assembly.

15 REPRESENTATIVE O'NEAL: Great. Thank
16 you.

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks
19 the gentleman and recognizes the lady from
20 Delaware, Ms. Krueger.

21 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Thank you,
22 Mr. Chairman.

23 Hello everybody. Thank you so much for
24 joining us here today.

25 So I want to follow up on a previous

1 colleague's questions. My colleague from
2 Northumberland and Snyder County asked about the
3 new student loan forgiveness program for nurses.
4 I was proud to support this. There was
5 bipartisan support in this chamber, and I have
6 heard heartbreaking stories from nurses on the
7 front line in Delaware County who have been
8 pushed to their limits during this pandemic. And
9 I think we need to do everything we can to
10 support and retain these nurses. Otherwise, you
11 know, our very lives will depend on having these
12 folks for health care.

13 So my first question for you, I believe I
14 heard you say that you were up to 20,000
15 applications for this program when it closed on
16 March 1st; is that correct?

17 MS. MCCLOUD: That is correct. Yes, we
18 are above that number now.

19 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: So far we've
20 allocated \$20 million for the program.

21 How far will you be able to get?

22 How many nurses will get funded with the
23 resources that you currently have appropriated?

24 Ms. MCCLOUD: Right. So we can't answer
25 that 100 percent with certainty, but if each

1 nurse has eligibility for the maximum amount of
2 relief, which is \$7,500, with \$2,500 per year for
3 three years, that would fund 2,666 nurses.

4 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Two thousand six
5 hundred and sixty-six nurses, and you've got
6 20,000 applications pending.

7 MS. MCCLLOUD: Right.

8 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: So the need is
9 great. And this is a program we've heard a lot
10 of interest on in my district. I was even
11 helping the mom of a recent nursing graduate
12 navigate the program application.

13 How soon will it be before the nurses
14 actually receive their payment if they're funded
15 in this first round?

16 MS. MCCLLOUD: Yeah. So we've been
17 building out this process very quickly, but there
18 are several steps to it. So we will need to
19 reach back out to employers to verify some of the
20 eligibility criteria. We have to communicate
21 with the servicers of the student loans for the
22 nurses who have applied.

23 So because of those various steps and
24 ensuring that there is enough time for responses
25 back, so that no one loses eligibility as a

1 result of a lack of response, and just the normal
2 selection process that needs to occur because the
3 program is oversubscribed with demand at this
4 point, we're anticipating it will be the second
5 half of the summer before we're able to send any
6 loan payments to the servicers to provide relief
7 for specific nurses.

8 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Okay. And I
9 know the Governor has proposed using another \$35
10 million in American Rescue Plan funds to expand
11 the program.

12 So how far would that get us?

13 If we're at 2,666 with the first round,
14 how many more nurses would we help?

15 MS. MCCLOUD: So that's a specific math
16 question I didn't think to calculate before
17 today, but -- so thank you for asking that
18 though. Basically, we'd be looking at \$35
19 million divided by \$7,500 if every applicant has
20 the full amount of student loans to be covered.
21 And so that would get us, you know, a portion of
22 the way in assisting more of those 20,000-plus
23 applicants, but certainly not -- not the entire
24 way there because we had, you know, calculated
25 that it would be a little over \$150 million to

1 cover that whole group.

2 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: And so the full
3 \$35 million would go directly to fund nurses;
4 that wouldn't be going to overhead for the
5 program?

6 MS. MCCLLOUD: That, you know, that's
7 always a question, if there are nuances to any
8 new program that require a system build or
9 something like that, that would have to be
10 evaluated, but typically PHEAA has been covering
11 out of our business earnings the administrative
12 costs for all of the programs we administer. And
13 in recent years, the only expenses that have been
14 applied have been for building out systems to
15 process.

16 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: And I would hope
17 that the resources you needed to build it out
18 have been taken out of the first \$20 million and
19 wouldn't need to come out of subsequent rounds.
20 So I heard you say again that we'd need about
21 \$150 million to fund the whole need.

22 If the legislature decided to send you
23 more money, would you have the capacity to
24 administer that?

25 MS. MCCLLOUD: Yes. So we're always happy

1 to administer programs as requested and figure
2 out how to get things in place to help
3 Pennsylvania residents, whether it's current
4 students enrolled, or nurses with outstanding
5 student loan payments that they're making. But
6 that's our wheelhouse.

7 That's what we're good at here at PHEAA,
8 administering programs for students and loan
9 borrowers. And so we would do as requested
10 there.

11 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: So nursing is
12 not the only profession that has had a high
13 stress and burnout rate due to COVID. Teachers
14 also are facing something similar. And I asked
15 the Department of Education Secretary yesterday
16 about the need for a similar student loan
17 forgiveness loan program for teachers, for
18 example, if that's something that the legislature
19 decided to approve, would you have the capacity
20 to administer this for another profession?

21 MS. MCCLOUD: Again, we -- we take on as,
22 you know, requested any new program that's
23 brought to us to administer and figure out what
24 the necessary steps are to put that in place.
25 I'm not necessarily the one to speak to our, you

1 know, workforce and specific needs surrounding
2 that, but we're always happy to administer these
3 programs.

4 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Well, again,
5 thank you for administering the program for
6 nurses. Please get the money out as fast as
7 possible and keep the overhead to a minimum, as
8 well, if possible.

9 Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks
11 the lady, recognizes the lady from Bucks,
12 Ms. Schroeder.

13 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr.
14 Chairman.

15 Good afternoon, everyone.

16 I'd like to ask you some questions about
17 outcomes for the recipients of the State grants
18 for students.

19 Do you know what percentage of State
20 grant recipients graduate?

21 MS. MCCLLOUD: Is the -- that's the
22 question --

23 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Yes.

24 MS. MCCLLOUD: -- just the graduation
25 rates?

1 So I'm looking back here. I know that we
2 have statistics around this. Yes, so in the most
3 recent cohort that we looked at, 77 percent of
4 the State grant award dollars went to students
5 who had graduated from their program of study.

6 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Okay. Do you
7 have any data on what percentage of State grant
8 recipients go on to find employment in areas
9 related to their field of study?

10 MS. MCCLLOUD: That is not something we
11 track specifically within the State Grant
12 Program. That would require a large amount of
13 data collection from post-secondary schools and,
14 you know, employers in a way that isn't currently
15 tracked in the Commonwealth. But we do -- we
16 track things, such as the percentage of the
17 dollars that go to students who graduate, what
18 percentage of recipients graduate within six
19 years, and what their persistence is from one
20 year to the next within the program.

21 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Okay. So do
22 you have a breakdown on how many students --
23 grant recipients go to get employment in
24 Pennsylvania?

25 MS. MCCLLOUD: No. I do not have that.

1 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Oh, okay. Is
2 that something you ever talked about maybe trying
3 to keep track of, to know, you know, that we're
4 keeping students here and they are getting
5 employed in Pennsylvania when they're done with
6 their education?

7 MS. MCCLLOUD: Yeah. I mean, there are
8 many data points that we've talked about that,
9 you know, would be interesting to see, but there
10 aren't necessarily mechanisms in place for that
11 right now. So we've had to, you know, sort of
12 pick and choose what we have focused on with the
13 available data. That would require having a new
14 structure in place to track down.

15 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Okay. Would
16 you, I guess, have to survey students in seeing
17 if they're using money that way or to go into
18 their field or if they get employment after they
19 leave school or --

20 MS. MCCLLOUD: Yeah. I think we -- I'd
21 probably ask if we could get back to you on that
22 with an answer.

23 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Oh, that's
24 okay. Sure.

25 MS. MCCLLOUD: Because we'd want our staff

1 to brainstorm around that.

2 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: I just, for
3 long term planning purposes, that's why I was
4 getting -- you'll see. We're getting there.

5 what do you see as PHEAA's role in
6 guiding students to programs of study that will
7 prepare them for high need occupational areas in
8 the Commonwealth?

9 MS. MCCLOUD: well, right now, within the
10 State Grant Program, we don't direct students in
11 that way. I mean, one off the benefits of the
12 State Grant Program is that it gives students
13 access to higher education and allows them to
14 sort of drive their own path. So the State Grant
15 Program provides funding to students, whether
16 they were attending a community college, a State
17 university, a State-related school, an
18 independent two or four-year school, a business
19 trade and technical school, a school of nursing,
20 et cetera. And it doesn't limit students to only
21 study particular programs either.

22 So to me, that's one of the beauties of
23 the State Grant Program, right, that it gives
24 students that ability to --

25 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Be flexible.

1 MS. MCCLLOUD: -- pursue --

2 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: Yeah, what
3 they want to do.

4 So is there anything then from that -- do
5 you think there's anything that can be done
6 legislatively that would help PHEAA encourage
7 students to enter these high demand jobs that
8 we're seeing that are needed right now in the
9 Commonwealth?

10 You can always get back to me, too.

11 MS. MCCLLOUD: Yeah, I think we'd like --
12 I'd like some time to think about that one.

13 Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE SCHROEDER: No. Yeah,
15 you're welcome.

16 So I just thought, you know, it's really
17 important that we focus on educating and keeping
18 graduates here in the Commonwealth. And any
19 assistance that you can give in seeing that
20 through would serve all of us, I think, in the
21 long term. So maybe ways to survey students,
22 making sure that, you know, another tool to make
23 sure that they're here and that they stay here
24 and that we find jobs for them here. But thank
25 you so much for being here. And that's all.

1 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks
2 the lady.

3 And for now, our final questioner, unless
4 there are those who we have missed, will be the
5 gentleman from Montgomery, Mr. Webster.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: Thank you,
7 Mr. Chairman.

8 I think this is an easy one. We've
9 talked about some of the programs, and in
10 particular, nurses in health care, at other times
11 this afternoon. And somehow, over the last few
12 days, it's been something I've been sort of
13 digging into more and more across departments in
14 our government and in education.

15 So I thought I'd summarize it this way.
16 Obviously, you've been paying attention and
17 targeting certain areas of education that lead to
18 specific qualifications and jobs across
19 Pennsylvania, and one of those has been a
20 healthcare focus. You know, I think all of our
21 colleagues have felt that pressure around nurses
22 and health care in particular, but I -- let's,
23 you know, finish up where we started and talk
24 about how we can make adjustments, not just, you
25 know, the student loan repayment, that piece, but

1 also creating the pipeline for more nurses where
2 we need them.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. MCCLOUD: Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: Anybody?

6 MR. HENCH: Sure, Representative.

7 Appreciate the perspective.

8 The healthcare industry, obviously with
9 the pandemic has certainly, you know, been
10 stressed as we've maneuvered through it. And you
11 know, with the overwhelming demand for nurse
12 educators, and also nurses that are working on,
13 you know, the floors in the hospitals, it's
14 something that we need to take into account.

15 One thing that I would say is we do have
16 a department within PHEAA called PA School
17 Services. It's 14 individuals that work across
18 the Commonwealth and do financial literacy
19 events, not just with juniors and seniors coming
20 out of high school, but also with adult students
21 that might want to be retooled.

22 And one thing that we do is we do educate
23 potential students on high demand occupations and
24 also earnings that could come from that to be
25 successful. So I think that, you know, we can

1 certainly enrich our communications around the
2 health care and nursing field to make sure that
3 that's more widely known across the Commonwealth.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: Maybe I can
5 focus a little bit in terms of PA-TIP Program and
6 that is there, you know, a way that we should be,
7 maybe legislatively, be thinking about how to
8 incentivize health care, or in this case, very
9 specifically, nurses across, you know, across
10 Pennsylvania?

11 MR. HENCH: Sure. So the PA-TIP Program
12 is, as Elizabeth McCloud was talking about, is
13 for, you know, degrees that are less than two
14 years in length. However, if the legislature
15 would want to expand that to a B.S.N. for
16 nursing, that's something, you know, if the
17 legislature would pass legislation, we could
18 certainly expand that program into other
19 health-related fields.

20 And just to address what Representative
21 Schroeder was talking about, you know, some data
22 collection. We do do a lot of data collection
23 around PA-TIP on graduates when they graduate
24 from their school. And then we also do a data
25 match with L&I to see if they're actually working

1 in their field of study, in which we educated
2 them in.

3 We don't currently have that authority in
4 the PA State Grant Program, but if we were given
5 that authority to do additional data matches with
6 Labor & Industry on employment, we could probably
7 get some more specific data on that.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: I'll allow us to
9 close out the hearing, but wanted to make sure
10 that we were beginning and ending with a very
11 valuable, you know, contribution, health, safety,
12 and also career paths for our nurses.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. HENCH: Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Chairman
16 Bradford, are we good?

17 All right. Well, thank you. It's been a
18 good day as we discussed higher education and the
19 way that we can continue to help develop our
20 students here in the Commonwealth.

21 Thank you all for appearing before us.
22 Thank you for the work you do for the
23 Commonwealth.

24 The Committee will reconvene tomorrow
25 morning at 10:00 a.m. with the Department of

1 Human Services. And this hearing is now
2 adjourned.

3 Thank you.

4 (Whereupon, the hearing concluded.)

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me on the within proceedings and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

Tracy L. Powell

Tracy L. Powell,

Court Reporter