ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 37–COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(ON BEHALF OF THE RURAL REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY BOARD)

PREFILED NOVEMBER 16, 2022

Referred to Committee on Education

SUMMARY—Authorizes the establishment of the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Center of Nevada. (BDR 34-361)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in ***bolded italics*** is new; matter between brackets [~~omitted material~~] is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to behavioral health; authorizing the establishment of the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Center of Nevada at one or more institutions within the Nevada System of Higher Education; prescribing the structure and duties of the Center; authorizing the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to accept, receive, invest, disburse and account for money received for purposes related to the Center; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Existing law authorizes the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to administer: (1) a program to provide loans for fees, books and living expenses to students in the nursing programs of the Nevada System of Higher Education; and (2) the Nevada Health Service Corps, which repays the loans of practitioners of certain health professions who practice in areas of this State for which a shortage of that type of practitioner exists. (NRS 396.890, 396.900, 396.903) **Section 6** of this bill similarly authorizes the Board to establish the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Center of Nevada at one or more institutions within the System for purposes related to strengthening the workforce of providers of behavioral health care in this State. **Section 6** requires the Center to consist of: (1) a main hub located at an institution within the System; and (2) regional hubs in each of the five behavioral health regions into which this State is divided. (NRS 433.428) To the extent that money is available, **section 6** authorizes each institution at which the

Center is established to provide resources to support the Center in accomplishing its duties. **Sections 3-5** of this bill define terms related to the Center and its activities.

If the Center is established, **section 7** of this bill requires the Center to establish a behavioral health workforce development consortium consisting of various persons and entities involved in education, behavioral health and workforce development. **Section 7** also requires the Center to develop and implement a strategic plan for the recruitment, education and retention of a qualified, diverse and evolving behavioral health workforce in this State. **Section 7** requires: (1) the strategic plan to include plans for convening and organizing the members of the consortium and other relevant persons and entities to create and implement strategies to develop the behavioral health workforce of this State; and (2) the Center, under the direction of the consortium, to carry out the duties prescribed by the strategic plan. **Section 8** of this bill requires the Center, if established, to perform various other duties related to strengthening the behavioral health workforce of this State, and **section 7** requires the strategic plan to include plans for performing those duties. **Section 9** of this bill authorizes the Board to: (1) accept gifts, grants and donations for the purposes of supporting the Center and its duties; and (2) receive, invest, disburse and account for all money received for that purpose. **Section 10** of this bill requires the Center, if established, to annually report to the Legislature, the Board, the Chancellor of the System and certain other entities concerning the activities of the Center.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 396 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 10, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 2. ***As used in sections 2 to 10, inclusive, of this act, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in sections 3, 4 and 5 of this act have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.***

Sec. 3. ***"Behavioral health region" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 433.426.***

Sec. 4. ***"Center" means the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Center of Nevada established pursuant to section 6 of this act.***

Sec. 5. ***"Provider of behavioral health care" means a person who is:***

1. Licensed, certified or registered pursuant to chapter 641, 641A, 641B, 641C or 641D of NRS;

2. Licensed as a physician, physician assistant or registered nurse and practices in psychiatry, addiction medicine or another specialty relating to behavioral health; or

3. A school counselor or school psychologist.

Sec. 6. ***1. The Board of Regents may establish the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Center of Nevada at an institution or multiple institutions within the System.***

2. The primary purposes of the Center must be to:

(a) Increase the number of graduates of high schools in this State who pursue higher education in fields related to behavioral health;

(b) Increase the number of graduates from programs for the education of providers of behavioral health care within the System who intern and practice in this State;

(c) Increase the number of providers of behavioral health care who have the specialized training necessary to address the most critical shortages of such providers in this State;

(d) Increase the number of supervisors and sites for internships for students and graduates of programs for the education of providers of behavioral health care;

(e) Decrease the amount of time between graduation from a program for the education of providers of behavioral health care and licensure, certification or registration and, if applicable, endorsement as such a provider; and

(f) Address other needs relating to the number and distribution of providers of behavioral health care in this State, as determined by the Center.

3. The Center must consist of:

(a) A main hub at one of the institutions at which the Center is established; and

(b) Regional hubs in each behavioral health region of this State.

4. To the extent that money is available for this purpose, each institution at which the Center is established may provide personnel, facilities, equipment and supplies to support the Center in carrying out the provisions of sections 2 to 10, inclusive, of this act. Such personnel, facilities, equipment and supplies may include, without limitation:

(a) Facilities for conferences and training;

(b) The time and labor of the faculty and staff of the institution; and

(c) Equipment for telehealth, as defined in NRS 629.515, and distance learning.

Sec. 7. ***1. If established, the Center shall:***

(a) Establish a behavioral health workforce development consortium. The consortium must consist of:

(1) Institutions within the System;

(2) Providers of behavioral health care;

(3) The Department of Education and school districts;

(4) State and local law enforcement agencies;

(5) Consumers of behavioral health care;

(6) Family members of consumers of behavioral health care;

(7) Hospitals and other facilities that provide behavioral health care;

(8) The Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Veterans Services, the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation and other relevant agencies of this State selected by the Center;

(9) Sites that provide internships for providers of behavioral health care;

(10) Representatives of members of the Armed Forces of the United States and the National Guard who are on active duty, veterans and families of such members and veterans;

(11) Representatives of historically marginalized communities, including, without limitation:

(I) Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning persons; and

(II) Persons of color;

(12) Representatives of persons with disabilities; and

(13) Other relevant persons and entities, as selected by the Center.

(b) Develop and implement a strategic plan for the recruitment, education and retention of a qualified, diverse and evolving behavioral health workforce in this State, with the highest priority placed on rural, frontier and underserved urban communities. The strategic plan must include, without limitation, plans for:

(1) Convening and organizing the members of the consortium created pursuant to paragraph (a) and other relevant persons and entities to develop and implement strategies to strengthen the behavioral health workforce in every behavioral health region of this State; and

(2) Performing the duties prescribed by section 8 of this act.

2. If established, the Center shall, under the direction of the consortium created pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection 1, perform the duties prescribed in the strategic plan developed pursuant to paragraph (b) of subsection 1.

3. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 417.005.

Sec. 8. *In addition to the duties prescribed by sections 7 and 10 of this act, the Center, if established, shall:*

1. Through the regional hubs established pursuant to section 6 of this act:

(a) Collaborate with other persons and entities to assess the specific behavioral health needs of each behavioral health region; and

(b) Engage in research and training specifically designed to address those needs.

2. Coordinate with the System, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation and other state agencies involved in behavioral health, education and workforce development to promote the efficient utilization of state resources designated for those purposes.

3. Build partnerships with school districts, institutions within the System, occupational licensing boards that license, certify or register providers of behavioral health care, the Department of Education, the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation and other public and private entities involved in workforce development to establish pipelines to careers in behavioral health from schools through professional practice. Such pipelines must focus on recruiting youth who are:

(a) From underserved and marginalized communities; or

(b) Interested in pursuing careers that address the most critical behavioral health needs of this State, including, without limitation, careers providing behavioral health care to children, the elderly and other underserved populations.

4. Develop and implement strategies to:

(a) Recruit adults who are interested in careers in behavioral health;

(b) Retain providers of behavioral health care who currently practice in this State; and

(c) Ensure that providers who participate in the pipelines established pursuant to subsection 3 ultimately practice in this State.

5. Collaborate with professional organizations for providers of behavioral health care, institutions that provide training and education for providers of behavioral health care and other relevant persons and entities to ensure the availability of high-quality continuing education on emerging, evidence-based practices for providing behavioral health care in various settings.

6. Provide or collaborate with other agencies to provide technical assistance for providers of behavioral health care regarding administrative issues and other nonacademic issues relating to the provision of behavioral health care in this State, including, without limitation:

(a) Obtaining a state business license and any necessary local licenses;

(b) Planning the establishment and operation of a business to provide behavioral health care;

(c) Billing insurers for the provision of behavioral health care; and

(d) The management of staff.

7. Provide technical assistance to support the provision of graduate and postgraduate training in evidence-based practices for providing behavioral health care at existing and new sites for the provision of such training, with the highest priority placed on sites that serve rural, frontier and underserved urban communities.

8. Provide training for supervisors of graduate and postgraduate training for providers of behavioral health care, with the highest priority placed on supervisors who serve rural, frontier and underserved urban communities.

9. Collaborate with existing entities or establish new programs to assist adult students in pursuing the education and training necessary to become a provider of behavioral health care.

10. Coordinate with other entities to obtain or, where necessary, collect and analyze data to:

(a) Determine where providers of behavioral health care who practice in this State were born, educated and trained;

(b) Evaluate the progression of persons through programs for the education and training of providers of behavioral health care in this State and determine where such persons practice after completing those programs;

(c) Ensure the strength and success of pipelines to careers in behavioral health from schools through professional practice; and

(d) Identify the degree to which programs of education and training for providers of behavioral health care produce an adequate number of specialists to meet the needs of this State and each behavioral health region.

11. Collaborate with agencies involved in the education, training, licensure, certification, registration and endorsement of providers of behavioral health care to develop systems for:

(a) Identifying methods used by providers of education or training for providers of behavioral health care to prepare participants in programs of such education or training to correctly implement evidence-based practices for providing behavioral health care;

(b) Identifying the practices and therapeutic modalities being taught to participants in programs of education or training for providers of behavioral health care; and

(c) To the extent feasible, tracking the implementation of the methods, practices and modalities described in paragraphs (a) and (b) by providers of behavioral health care.

12. Monitor progress toward the goals prescribed in the strategic plan developed pursuant to section 7 of this act.

13. Perform the duties prescribed by this section and section 7 of this act in a manner that leverages existing programs and resources and avoids duplication of efforts.

Sec. 9. ***The Board of Regents may:***

1. Apply for and accept gifts, grants and donations for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of sections 2 to 10, inclusive, of this act.

2. Receive, invest, disburse and account for all money received for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of sections 2 to 10, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 10. ***On or before June 1 of each year, the Center, if established, shall:***

1. Compile a report concerning its activities during the immediately preceding calendar year and planned activities for the current calendar year and following calendar years; and

2. Submit the report to:

(a) The Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to:

(1) The Joint Interim Standing Committee on Health and Human Services; and

(2) The Joint Interim Standing Committee on Commerce and Labor;

(b) The Commission on Behavioral Health;

(c) Each regional behavioral health policy board created by NRS 433.429;

(d) The Board of Regents; and

(e) The Chancellor of the System.

Sec. 11. The provisions of subsection 1 of NRS 218D.380 do not apply to any provision of this act which adds or revises a requirement to submit a report to the Legislature.

Sec. 12. 1. This section becomes effective upon passage and approval.

2. Sections 1 to 11, inclusive, of this act become effective:

(a) Upon passage and approval for the purpose of performing any preparatory administrative tasks that are necessary to carry out the provisions of this act; and

(b) On October 1, 2023, for all other purposes.