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House Bill 5826 (as passed by the House)  
Sponsor: Representative Mai Xiong  
House Committee: Health Policy (discharged)  
Senate Committee: Housing and Human Services

Date Completed: 10-15-24

## **CONTENT**

### **The bill would enact a new law to do the following:**

- **Establish the Doula Scholarship Program administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and prescribe the Program's eligibility requirements.**
- **Allow the DHHS to award a maximum \$3,000 scholarship per awardee.**
- **Require a scholarship recipient to be working toward the completion of doula training within six months of receiving the funds.**
- **Create the Doula Scholarship Fund within the State Treasury.**

### Doula Scholarship Program

The bill would create the Doula Scholarship Program to be administered by the DHHS. The DHHS would have to do all the following in implementing the Program:

- Award scholarships to eligible individuals under the bill.
- Promulgate rules necessary to administer the bill.
- Publicize the availability of the Program, in partnership with universities, nonprofit organizations, and other persons.

Under the bill, "doula" would mean an individual who provides continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to a mother before, during, and shortly after childbirth to help the mother achieve a healthy and satisfying childbirth experience.

### Scholarship Eligibility

The DHHS could award a scholarship for eligible costs to an individual determined by the DHHS to meet all the following eligibility criteria:

- Had not been awarded a scholarship under the bill at the time of application submission.
- Demonstrated a financial hardship through household income or through receipt of financial assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, And Children; the Social Security Administration SSI program; or another program.
- Completed a signed application stating intent to become a doula in the State and provided proof of residency in the State.
- Met any other standards established by the DHHS's rules.

"Eligible costs" would mean the costs of doula training, including the costs of books, workshop fees, examination fees, and membership fees. "Financial hardship" would mean insufficient

financial resources to complete doula training without financial assistance. "Doula training" would mean the training an individual completes to become a doula and that is approved by the Michigan Doula Advisory Council within the DHHS.

An individual could apply for a scholarship by completing an application on a form provided by the DHHS.

Under the bill, an individual could not receive more than \$3,000 as a scholarship award and could not receive more than one Doula Scholarship Program award.

Within six months of receiving a scholarship, the individual would have to be working toward the completion of doula training or have completed doula training. The individual would have to provide the DHHS with documentation demonstrating such information. The DHHS would have to accept any of the following as documentation:

- A letter from a health care professional who verified the individual was serving as a doula and the health care professional worked with the individual.
- A letter from a client who received services from the individual acting as the client's doula.
- Any other documentation the DHHS determined was sufficient to demonstrate that the individual was working toward, or had completed, doula training.

If an individual were unable to demonstrate the information described above to the DHHS, the DHHS would have to seek repayment of the award.

#### Doula Scholarship Fund

The bill would create the Doula Scholarship Fund within the State Treasury. The State Treasury could receive money or other assets from any source to deposit into the Fund and would have to direct investment of the Fund. The State Treasurer would have to credit to the fund, interest and earnings from Fund investments. Money in the Fund at the close of the fiscal year would have to remain in the Fund and would not lapse into the General Fund.

The DHHS would be the administrator of the Doula Scholarship Fund for auditing purposes, and the DHHS only could spend money from the Fund upon appropriation for the purpose of providing Program scholarships.

#### **PREVIOUS LEGISLATION**

*(This section does not provide a comprehensive account of previous legislative efforts on this subject matter.)*

The bill is a companion bill to Senate Bill 826 of the 2022-2023 Legislative Session.

Legislative Analyst: Eleni Lionas

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have an indeterminate negative fiscal impact on the DHHS and no fiscal impact on local units of government. The DHHS would incur minor administrative costs resulting from the promulgation of rules to implement the Program. Costs related to administering the Program once established would depend on the necessary time investment. If the administration of the Program could be supported using existing full-time equivalents (FTEs) and resources, the DHHS would incur no costs; however, if the administration of the Program would require one or more additional FTEs, the average annual cost incurred by the DHHS would be approximately \$137,500 per FTE, which includes salary and benefits.

Actual expenditures from the Fund to support the Program created in the bill would be contingent upon appropriation, therefore the impact on the DHHS would depend on how much funding was made available through an appropriation. The Fiscal Year 2024-2025 DHHS budget included \$2.9 million gross to support "doula training and continuing education". A portion of this funding may be eligible to support the Program created under the bill; however, Section 1948 of Public Act 121 of 2024 Article 6 also allows the \$2.9 million gross to be used to support continuing education costs, which may not fall under the definition of "eligible costs" included in this bill.

The bill would have no fiscal impact on the Department of Treasury. Based on the level of estimated revenue likely to be appropriated to the Fund, ongoing costs associated with administration and investment would be less than \$100. Current appropriations would be sufficient to carry out these activities.

Fiscal Analyst: Ellyn Ackerman  
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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.