

Public Law 95-603
95th Congress

An Act

Nov. 6, 1978

[S. 990]

To amend title 5, United States Code, to provide special allowances to certain physicians employed by the United States in order to enhance the recruitment and retention of such physicians.

Federal
Physicians
Comparability
Allowance Act of
1978.
5 USC 5948 note.

5 USC 5948.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Federal Physicians Comparability Allowance Act of 1978".

SEC. 2. (a) Subchapter IV of chapter 59 of title 5, United States Code, relating to allowances, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new section:

"§ 5948. Physicians comparability allowances

"(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and in order to recruit and retain highly qualified Government physicians, the head of an agency, subject to the provisions of this section and such regulations as the President or his designee may prescribe, may enter into a service agreement with a Government physician which provides for such physician to complete a specified period of service in such agency in return for an allowance for the duration of such agreement in an amount to be determined by the agency head and specified in the agreement, but not to exceed—

"(1) \$7,000 per annum if, at the time the agreement is entered into, the Government physician has served as a Government physician for twenty-four months or less, or

"(2) \$10,000 per annum if the Government physician has served as a Government physician for more than twenty-four months.

"(b) An allowance may not be paid pursuant to this section to any physician who—

"(1) is employed on less than a half-time or intermittent basis,

"(2) occupies an internship or residency training position,

"(3) is a reemployed annuitant, or

"(4) is fulfilling a scholarship obligation.

"(c) The head of an agency, pursuant to such regulations, criteria, and conditions as the President or his designee may prescribe, shall determine categories of positions applicable to physicians in such agency with respect to which there is a significant recruitment and retention problem. Only physicians serving in such positions shall be eligible for an allowance pursuant to this section. The amounts of each such allowance shall be determined by the agency head, subject to such regulations, criteria, and conditions as the President or his designee may prescribe, and shall be the minimum amount necessary to deal with the recruitment and retention problem for each such category of physicians.

"(d) Any agreement entered into by a physician under this section shall be for a period of one year of service in the agency involved unless the physician requests an agreement for a longer period of service. No agreement shall be entered into under this section later than September 30, 1979, nor shall any agreement cover a period of service extending beyond September 30, 1981.

“(e) Unless otherwise provided for in the agreement under subsection (f) of this section, an agreement under this section shall provide that the physician, in the event that such physician voluntarily, or because of misconduct, fails to complete at least one year of service pursuant to such agreement, shall be required to refund the total amount received under this section, unless the head of the agency, pursuant to such regulations as may be prescribed under this section by the President or his designee, determines that such failure is necessitated by circumstances beyond the control of the physician.

“(f) Any agreement under this section shall specify, subject to such regulations as the President or his designee may prescribe, the terms under which the head of the agency and the physician may elect to terminate such agreement, and the amounts, if any, required to be refunded by the physician for each reason for termination.

“(g) For the purpose of this section—

“(1) ‘Government physician’ means any individual employed as a physician who is paid under—

“Government physician.”

“(A) section 5332 of this title, relating to the General Schedule;

5 USC 5332.

“(B) section 5361 of this title, or similar statutory authority, relating to administratively determined pay for certain specially qualified scientific or professional personnel;

5 USC 5361.

“(C) section 3 of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 (16 U.S.C. 831b), relating to the Tennessee Valley Authority;

“(D) title 4 of the Foreign Service Act of 1946 (22 U.S.C. 861-890), relating to the Foreign Service;

“(E) section 10 of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50 U.S.C. 403j), relating to the Central Intelligence Agency;

“(F) section 121 of title 2 of the Canal Zone Code, relating to the Canal Zone Government and the Panama Canal Company; or

“(G) section 2 of the Act of May 29, 1959 (Public Law 86-36, as amended, 50 U.S.C. 402 note), relating to the National Security Agency; and

“(2) ‘agency’ means an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of this title, and the District of Columbia government.

“Agency.”

“(h) (1) Any allowance paid under this section shall not be considered as basic pay for the purposes of subchapter VI and section 5595 of chapter 55, chapter 81, 83, or 87 of this title, or other benefits related to basic pay.

5 USC 5551,
5595, 8101 *et seq.*,
8301 *et seq.*,
8701 *et seq.*

“(2) Any allowance under this section for a Government physician shall be paid in the same manner and at the same time as the physician’s basic pay is paid.

“(i) Any regulations, criteria, or conditions that may be prescribed under this section by the President or his designee shall not be applicable to the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Tennessee Valley Authority shall have sole responsibility for administering the provisions of this section with respect to Government physicians employed by the Authority.”

TVA
administration.

(b) The analysis for chapter 59 of such title is amended by adding at the end thereof the following:

"5948. Physicians comparability allowances."

5 USC 5948 note.

(c) No agreement shall be entered into under section 5948 of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), before the 60th day after the date of the enactment of this Act. No such agreement shall provide for the payment of any allowance under such section for any pay period beginning before the later of—

- (1) such 60th day, or
- (2) October 1, 1978.

5 USC 5948 note.

SEC. 3. The amendments made by this Act are repealed, unless specifically extended by Act of Congress, effective on September 30, 1981.

Approved November 6, 1978.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

SENATE REPORT No. 95-864 (Comm. on Governmental Affairs).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 124 (1978):

May 25, considered and passed Senate.

Oct. 3, considered and passed House, amended.

Oct. 13, Senate concurred in House amendments.