A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Linking Industry to Nursing Education Fund; amending s. 1009.8962, F.S.; revising legislative intent to incentivize collaboraton with other persons and entities that contribute monetary or nonmonetary contributions; authorizing dollar-to-dollar matches of funds for certain contributions by persons or entities to an institution; revising Board of Governors and State Board of Education duties to adopt regulations and reules, respectively, to administer the program; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. **Section 1009.8962, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

1009.8962 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund.—

(1) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Act."

(2) Recognizing that the state has a persistent and growing nursing shortage, it is the intent of the Legislature to address this critical workforce need by incentivizing collaboration between nursing education programs, ~~and~~ health care partners, and other persons and entities, that contribute

monetary or nonmonetary contributions, through the establishment of the LINE Fund. This fund is intended to meet local, regional, and state workforce demand by recruiting faculty and clinical preceptors, increasing the capacity of high-quality nursing education programs, and increasing the number of nursing education program graduates who are prepared to enter the workforce.

(3) As used in this section, the term:

(a) "Health care partner" means a health care provider as defined in s. 768.38(2).

(b) "Institution" means a school district career center under s. 1001.44; a charter technical career center under s. 1002.34; a Florida College System institution; a state university; an independent nonprofit college or university located and chartered in this state and accredited by an agency or association that is recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States Department of Education to grant baccalaureate degrees; or an independent school, college, or university with an accredited program as defined in s. 464.003 which is located in this state and licensed by the Commission for Independent Education pursuant to s. 1005.31, or an institution authorized under s. 1009.521, which has a nursing education program that meets or exceeds the following:

1. For a certified nursing assistant program, a completion rate of at least 70 percent for the prior year.

2. For a licensed practical nurse, associate of science in nursing, and bachelor of science in nursing program, a first-time passage rate on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensing Examination of at least 75 percent for the prior year based on a minimum of 10 testing participants.

(c) "Student" means a person who is a resident for tuition purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21 and enrolled in a nursing education program at an institution.

(4) The LINE Fund shall be administered by the Board of Governors for state universities and the Department of Education for all other institutions.

(5) Subject to available funds, for every monetary or nonmonetary contribution ~~dollar contributed~~ to an institution by a health care partner or other person or entity, the fund shall provide a dollar-to-dollar match to the participating institution. Monetary and nonmonetary contributions from health care partners shall receive priority when awarding matching funds to institutions.

(6)(a) Funds may be used for student scholarships, recruitment of additional faculty, equipment, and simulation centers to advance high-quality nursing education programs throughout the state.

(b) Funds may not be used for the construction of new buildings.

(7)(a) To participate, an institution must submit a timely

and completed proposal to the Board of Governors or Department of Education, in a format prescribed by the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as applicable.

(b) The proposal must identify a health care partner located and licensed to operate in the state or other person or entity whose ~~monetary~~ contributions will be matched by the fund on a dollar-to-dollar basis.

(c) A proposal may not be comprised solely of nonmonetary contributions.

(8) The Board of Governors or Department of Education, as applicable, must review and evaluate each completed and timely submitted proposal according to the following minimum criteria:

(a) Whether monetary and nonmonetary contributions ~~funds~~ committed by the health care partner or other person or entity will contribute to an eligible purpose.

(b) How the institution plans to use the funds or nonmonetary contribution, including how such funds or nonmonetary contribution will be utilized to increase student enrollment and program completion.

(c) How the health care partner will onboard and retain graduates.

(d) How the funds or nonomonetary contribution will expand the institution's nursing education programs to meet local, regional, or state workforce demands. If applicable, this shall include advanced education nursing programs and how the funds or

nonmonetary contribution will increase the number of faculty and clinical preceptors and planned efforts to utilize the clinical placement process established in s. 14.36.

(9)(a) Each institution with an approved proposal shall notify the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as applicable, upon receipt of the ~~health care partner~~ provided funds or nonmonetary contribution identified in the proposal. The Board of Governors or Department of Education, as applicable, shall release grant funds, on a dollar-for-dollar basis, up to the amount of funds or the fair market value of the nonmonetary contribution received by the institution.

(b) Annually, by February 1, each institution awarded grant funds in the previous fiscal year shall submit a report to the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as applicable, that demonstrates the expansion as outlined in the proposal and the use of funds. At minimum, the report must include, by program level, the number of additional nursing education students enrolled; if scholarships were awarded using grant funds, the number of students who received scholarships and the average award amount; and the outcomes of students as reported by the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help pursuant to s. 14.36(3)(l).

(10) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations and the State Board of Education shall adopt rules to administer the fund, establish dates for the submission and review of

proposals, award funds, determine under what circumstances nonmonetary contributions may be considered, how the fair market value of such nonmonetary contributions may be determined, and other regulations and rules necessary to implement this section.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.