A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to a coordinated health care workforce
2 recruitment and retention effort.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:
Section 1. HEALTH WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION —

1. The department of public health shall lead a coordinated effort to address recruitment and retention of direct care professionals and other health care professionals, including but not limited to nursing, mental health, and oral health professionals, necessary to meet the current and future demand for critical health care services and long-term services and supports in the state.

2. In partnership with key public and private stakeholders including but not limited to representatives of employers and direct care professionals from various settings, consumers, family caregivers, advocates, community colleges, labor, the Iowa caregivers, united way, the Olmstead consumer task force, and the departments of education and human services, the department on aging, the office of the long-term care ombudsman, and other stakeholders, and in alignment with recommendations of the older Iowans legislature, the elevate aging collaborative, the future ready Iowa initiative, the Iowa skills2compete coalition, the 2016 direct care workforce summit and the direct care workforce 2020 regional listening sessions, and of other appropriate entities, the department shall do all of the following:

a. Expand existing recruitment and retention efforts of the direct care workforce initiative including competency-based training and specialty endorsements in Alzheimer’s disease and dementia, mental health, oral health, and other areas; and provide the needed infrastructure, policies, procedures, and repository to support accurate recordkeeping and portability of training credentials and certifications for direct care professionals.

b. Lead a multistakeholder and interagency initiative to inform policy making and to identify and implement strategies to do all of the following:

(1) Increase compensation and provide benefits for
those who work in the direct care sector and other health professions that may include individual tax credits, minimum wage increases, and increased provider reimbursements.

(2) Conduct data analysis specific to various aspects of the direct care workforce and other health care professions including worker turnover and best practices.

(3) Provide forgivable loans and scholarships for high-demand health care sectors and place a high priority on strategies to attract new and more diverse populations to the health care field as well as retain older workers and individuals with disabilities in the field for a longer period.

c. Retain existing successful workforce initiatives and allocate unused portions of funds to health and long-term services and support initiatives to more fully support existing direct care professional initiatives and other health care professional recruitment and retention efforts.

3. The department of public health shall provide a progress report to the governor and the general assembly by January 1, 2018, and annually by January 1, thereafter, including recommendations for changes in law or funding to support the coordinated effort.

EXPLANATION

The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

This bill relates to health workforce recruitment and retention. The bill directs the department of public health (DPH) to lead a coordinated effort to address recruitment and retention of direct care professionals and other health care professionals, including but not limited to nursing, mental health, and oral health professionals, necessary to meet the current and future demand for critical health care services and long-term services and supports in the state.

The bill directs DPH, in partnership with key public and private stakeholders and in alignment with recommendations of various task forces, workgroups, and coalitions to: (1) expand
1 existing recruitment and retention efforts for direct care
2 professionals and provide the needed infrastructure, policies,
3 procedures, and repository to support accurate recordkeeping
4 and portability of training credentials and certifications
5 for direct care professionals; (2) lead a multistakeholder
6 and interagency initiative to inform policy and to identify
7 and implement strategies to increase compensation and provide
8 benefits for those who work in the direct care sector and
9 other health professions, conduct data analysis specific to
10 various aspects of the direct care workforce and other health
11 care professions including worker turnover and best practices;
12 and provide forgivable loans and scholarships for high-demand
13 health care sectors and place a high priority on strategies
14 to attract new and more diverse populations to the health
15 care field as well as retain older workers and individuals
16 with disabilities in the field for a longer period; and (3)
17 retain existing successful workforce initiatives and allocate
18 unused portions of funds to health and long-term services and
19 support initiatives to more fully support existing direct care
20 professional initiatives and other health care professional
21 recruitment and retention efforts.
22 The bill directs DPH to provide a progress report to the
23 governor and the general assembly by January 1, 2018, and
24 annually by January 1, thereafter, including recommendations
25 for changes in law or funding to support the coordinated
26 effort.