

**First Regular Session
Sixty-ninth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 13-0662.01 Brita Darling x2241

SENATE BILL 13-178

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Hudak, Giron, Grantham, Jahn, Kerr, Newell, Todd

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Hamner, Kraft-Tharp, May, Navarro, Schafer

Senate Committees

Health & Human Services

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING AUTHORIZING RED ROCKS COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO**
102 **OFFER A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM AS A**
103 **PROGRAM OF GRADUATE EDUCATION.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)

Currently, Red Rocks community college offers a certificate program in physician assistant studies, and, through an affiliation with St. Francis university in Pennsylvania, students may obtain a master of medical science degree. The eligibility requirements of the accrediting

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

body of physician assistant programs now requires the sponsor of the program to confer a graduate degree upon completion of the program.

The bill authorizes Red Rocks community college to continue providing its physician assistant studies program by authorizing Red Rocks community college to confer a graduate degree on students who complete the physician assistant studies program.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 hereby finds and declares that:

4 (a) The health care industry is relying, in part, on the physician
5 assistant profession to meet certain provider needs in the present and in
6 the future that will otherwise be unmet without these providers;

7 (b) The accreditation standards for physician assistant programs
8 require that all currently accredited programs confer graduate degrees
9 upon those students who initially enroll in the physician assistant program
10 after 2020;

11 (c) Further, in order to meet the eligibility requirements of the
12 accreditation review commission on education for the physician assistant,
13 a single institution must be clearly identified as the sponsor of the
14 program, must be authorized under applicable law to provide a program
15 of graduate education, must be accredited by a recognized regional
16 accrediting agency, and must be authorized by the accrediting agency to
17 confer a graduate degree upon those students who complete the physician
18 assistant program;

19 (d) Physician assistant programs that are not in compliance with
20 these degree requirements by January 1, 2021, will have their
21 accreditation withdrawn;

22 (e) Red Rocks community college's physician assistant program

1 (RRCCPAP) is accredited through the accreditation review commission
2 on education for the physician assistant. Red Rocks community college
3 offers a certificate program in physician assistant studies and prepares the
4 student for the national exam through a twenty-five-month-long program
5 designed to train individuals to provide primary care to the medically
6 underserved. Admission requirements include a bachelor's degree and
7 2,000 hours of paid medical experience. The RRCCPAP currently offers
8 an on-line master of medical science degree through an affiliation with St.
9 Francis university in Pennsylvania.

10 (f) In order to continue to meet the eligibility requirements and
11 ensure that Red Rocks community college can continue to prepare
12 students to serve as physician assistants, Red Rocks community college
13 must be authorized to confer a masters of physician assistant studies
14 degree on students completing the RRCCPAP on its own, and not through
15 an affiliation with St. Francis university in Pennsylvania.

16 (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that it is in the best
17 interests of the state of Colorado to authorize Red Rocks community
18 college to seek accreditation for and offer its physician assistant program
19 as a program of graduate education.

20 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-60-211, **add** (3)
21 as follows:

22 **23-60-211. Degrees.** (3) PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-60-213, RED
23 ROCKS COMMUNITY COLLEGE MAY OFFER A GRADUATE PROGRAM IN
24 PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES.

25 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 23-60-213 as
26 follows:

27 **23-60-213. Red Rocks community college - physician assistant**

1 **master's program.** NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW
2 TO THE CONTRARY, RED ROCKS COMMUNITY COLLEGE IS AUTHORIZED TO
3 CONFER A GRADUATE DEGREE UPON A STUDENT WHO COMPLETES THE
4 PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM AND SHALL SEEK
5 ACCREDITATION FOR THE PROGRAM.

6 **SECTION 4. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
7 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
8 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August
9 7, 2013, if adjournment sine die is on May 8, 2013); except that, if a
10 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the
11 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act
12 within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect
13 unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
14 November 2014 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
15 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.