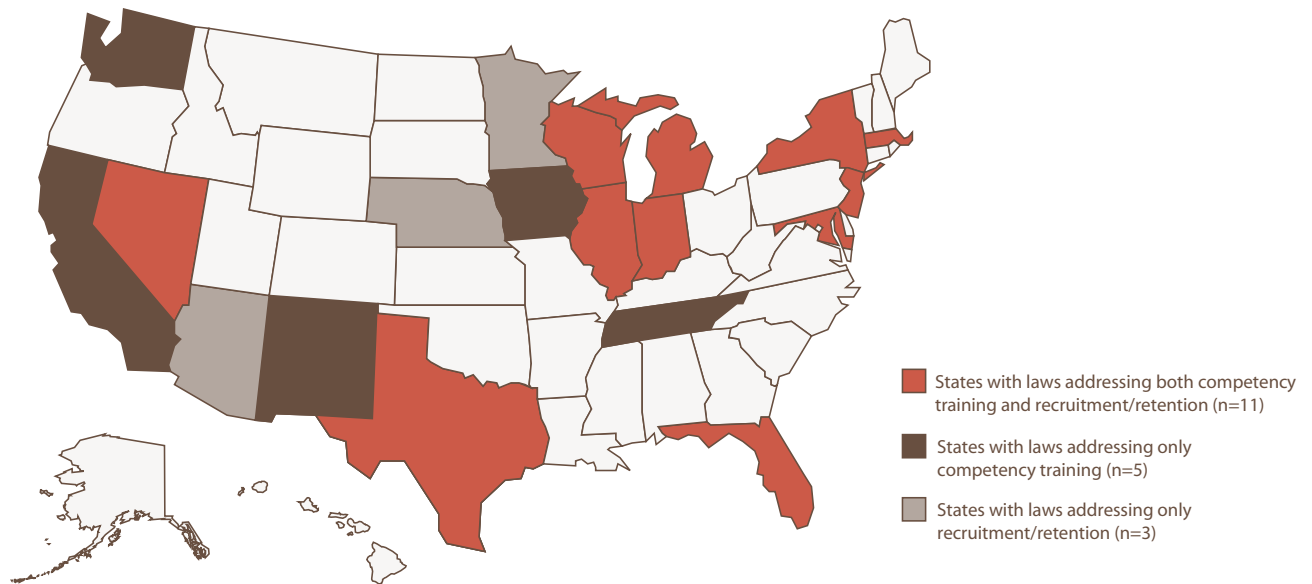


Legislative Data Byte

States with Laws Addressing Competency Training and/or Recruitment/Retention of Underrepresented Populations in the Health Sciences Workforce (as of September 30, 2007)



Research has demonstrated that underrepresentation of minority racial/ethnic groups and a lack of cultural competency in the health sciences workforce is a recurring problem and that ethnic diversity among physicians may be linked to improved access and quality of care for minorities.¹ In addition, the changing racial/ethnic composition of the United States will require that health professions improve their efforts to provide culturally competent care to all patients.² Under the Disparities Workforce topic area, SCLD monitors state laws and resolutions concerning state efforts to: (1) increase the number of minorities and other underrepresented populations in biomedical research, health care, or public health careers (e.g., through recruitment, school outreach, or scholarships), or (2) improve the ability of the current biomedical and health care workforce to adequately address the health needs of minorities and other medically underserved populations (e.g., through language or cultural competency training, incentives for providers to work in underserved areas, or training in minority health issues).

Eleven states—**Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Texas, and Wisconsin**—passed laws that address both competency training and recruitment or retention of minori-

ties in the workforce. For example, a law enacted in **Indiana** requires the state's Department of Health to develop and implement an aggressive recruitment and retention program aimed at minorities in the health and social services professions, and to implement an awareness program to increase cultural competency of these professions to the special needs of minorities.

Five states—**California, Iowa, New Mexico, Tennessee, and Washington**—enacted laws that address competency training, while three states—**Arizona, Nebraska, and Minnesota**—enacted legislation solely concerning recruitment/retention.

Four states—**Arkansas, Florida, New York, and Wisconsin**—have laws addressing school outreach activities designed to interest minority or other underrepresented students in biomedical or health careers.

1. Price et al. The role of cultural diversity climate in recruitment, promotion, and retention of faculty in academic medicine. *J Gen Intern Med* 2005 Jul;20(7):565-71.

2. Mitchell et al. Addressing health care disparities and increasing workforce diversity: the next step for the dental, medical, and public health professions. *Am J Public Health*, 2006 Dec;96(12):2093-7. Epub 2006 Oct 31.