

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H.F. 1170
Version: First engrossment

DATE: March 6, 2015

Authors: Bennett and others

Subject: Teacher loan forgiveness program

Analyst: Lisa Larson

This publication can be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please call 651-296-6753 (voice); or the Minnesota State Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY) for assistance. Summaries are also available on our website at: www.house.mn/hrd/.

Overview

Establishes a loan forgiveness program available for up to five years to newly licensed teachers teaching in an identified teacher shortage area. Appropriates unspecified sums to the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education for the program.

Section

1 Teacher shortage loan forgiveness program.

Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines qualified educational loan, school district, teacher, and teacher shortage area for purposes of this program.

Subd. 2. Program established; administration. Directs the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education to establish and administer a teacher shortage loan forgiveness program. Makes a teacher teaching in a teacher shortage area eligible for the program.

Subd. 3. Annual designation of teacher shortage areas. Directs the education commissioner to annually designate shortage areas and to periodically survey school districts and Board of Teaching-approved teacher preparation programs to determine teacher shortage areas.

Subd. 4. Application for loan forgiveness. Directs interested applicants to apply for the program according to the rules of the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education. Requires program participants to reapply annually and to submit an affidavit verifying that the teacher is teaching in a shortage area.

Section

Subd. 5. Amount of loan forgiveness. Limits the annual loan forgiveness to an unspecified amount or the cumulative balance of the participant's qualified educational loans, whichever is less. Makes participants responsible for securing their loans. Requires teachers to apply for the program within the first five consecutive school years after graduating from an approved teacher preparation program.

Subd. 6. Penalties. Allows an applicant's teaching license to be suspended or revoked and allows school districts to discipline an applicant who submits false or misleading information.

Subd. 7. Fund established. Establishes a teacher shortage loan forgiveness repayment fund that does not revert to any state fund in any fiscal year and remains continuously available.

Subd. 8. Annual reporting. Directs the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education to annually report by February 1 to the legislature's K-12 and higher education committees on the number of teachers who received loan forgiveness, the teachers' areas of instruction, the amount paid to the teachers, and other outcome measures identified by the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education.

Subd. 9. Rulemaking. Directs the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education to adopt rules to administer this program.

2 Appropriations. Appropriates unspecified general fund amounts in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education for the teacher shortage loan forgiveness program and to adopt program rules.