

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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### 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 in the manner determined by 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 amount of loan forgiveness or the cumulative balance of the participant's qualified educational loans, whichever is less. Makes participants responsible for securing their loans. Limits teacher eligibility to 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 on a program application.

**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 report to the legislature's 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 implement 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.