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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 526      Session of  
1991

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INTRODUCED BY TRICH, COLE, LLOYD, STAIRS, MELIO, LESCOVITZ, COY,  
DALEY, FREEMAN, HECKLER, NAILOR, JOHNSON, ROEBUCK, HERMAN,  
ANGSTADT, NOYE, CARLSON, CARONE, ARGALL, MERRY, FLEAGLE,  
G. SNYDER, BARLEY, STEIGHNER, BELARDI, BELFANTI, BISHOP,  
WILLIAMS AND TRELLO, MARCH 11, 1991

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 11, 1991

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AN ACT

1 Providing for Commonwealth support for the Agriculture Education  
2 Loan Forgiveness Program for Pennsylvania residents who  
3 graduate from institutions of higher education and who apply  
4 their degrees in agriculture to family farms within this  
5 Commonwealth.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. Short title.

9 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Agriculture  
10 Education Loan Forgiveness Act.

11 Section 2. Definitions.

12 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
13 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
14 context clearly indicates otherwise:

15 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance  
16 Agency.

17 "Agricultural products." Crops, livestock and livestock  
18 products, and commodities, including, but not limited to:

(1) Field crops, including corn, wheat, oats, rye, barley, hay, potatoes and dry beans.

(2) Fruits, including apples, peaches, grapes, cherries and berries.

(3) Vegetables, including tomatoes, snap beans, cabbage, carrots, beets, onions and mushrooms.

(4) Horticultural specialties, including nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees and flowers.

(5) Cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, furbearing animals, milk, eggs and furs.

(6) Timber, wood and other wood products derived from trees.

(7) Aquatic plants and animals and their by-products.

(8) Products derived from any of the above and other products derived from the business of farming, including such other products as may be manufactured, derived or prepared from the heretofore mentioned products, raw or processed, which are used as food for man or animals.

"Family farm." The real property of a farm owned by members of an immediate family or by a family farm corporation used for the production, for commercial purposes, of agricultural products.

"Family farm corporation." A corporation of which at least 75% of its assets are devoted to the business of agriculture and at least 75% of each class of stock of the corporation is continuously owned by members of the immediate family.

"Immediate family member." A spouse, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, grandparent, brother, stepbrother, sister, stepsister or like relative-in-law of an owner of real property.

"Practice of veterinary medicine." The practice in the field

1 of veterinary medicine by any person qualified by educational  
2 training and experience in the science and techniques of  
3 veterinary medicine and who is currently licensed to practice  
4 veterinary medicine by the Pennsylvania State Board of  
5 Veterinary Medicine under the act of December 27, 1974 (P.L.995,  
6 No.326), known as the Veterinary Medicine Practice Act.

7 "Qualified applicant." A resident of this Commonwealth who  
8 meets all of the following criteria:

9 (1) Holds a degree in a field related to the production  
10 of agricultural products or in the field of veterinary  
11 medicine, from an institution of higher education located  
12 within this Commonwealth, approved by the agency for  
13 participation under this act.

14 (2) Is in the first year of full-time employment or work  
15 on a family farm or in the practice of veterinary medicine, a  
16 portion of which activity must be for the protection and  
17 enhancement of agricultural animal health and productivity,  
18 on or after July 1, 1989.

19 (3) Has borrowed through the agency-administered  
20 Guaranteed Student Loan Programs.

21 "Secretary." The Secretary of Agriculture of the  
22 Commonwealth.

23 "Veterinary medicine." That branch of medicine which deals  
24 with the diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, administration,  
25 prescription, operation or manipulation or application of any  
26 apparatus or appliance for any disease, pain, deformity, defect,  
27 injury, wound or physical condition of any animal or for the  
28 prevention of or the testing for the presence of any disease.

29 Section 3. Agriculture Education Loan Forgiveness Program.

30 Qualified applicants who are selected for the Agriculture

1 Education Loan Forgiveness Program, in accordance with this act,  
2 shall be eligible for payment by the agency of a portion of the  
3 debt incurred by the applicant through the agency-administered  
4 Guaranteed Student Loan Programs for the education necessary to  
5 receive a degree in an agriculturally related field. For each  
6 year that the applicant is employed full time on a family farm  
7 or works full time on a family farm, a portion of which must be  
8 located within this Commonwealth, or is engaged in the practice  
9 of veterinary medicine within this Commonwealth, a portion of  
10 which activity must be for the protection and enhancement of  
11 agricultural animal health and productivity, the agency shall  
12 forgive a proportional part of the applicant's loan. No more  
13 than \$2,000 shall be forgiven in any year, and no more than  
14 \$10,000 shall be forgiven for any applicant. Payments shall be  
15 made in accordance with the procedures established by the  
16 agency.

17 Section 4. Loan forgiveness awards.

18 Recipients of the loan forgiveness awards shall be those  
19 applicants who are approved by the Department of Agriculture.  
20 Each applicant shall be required to submit such documentation of  
21 continued eligibility as the agency may require.

22 Section 5. Funding.

23 Loan forgiveness awards shall be made to the extent that  
24 funds are appropriated by the General Assembly.

25 Section 6. Responsibility of agency.

26 It shall be the responsibility of the agency to administer  
27 the Agriculture Education Loan Forgiveness Program established  
28 by this act and to adopt such regulations, policies, procedures  
29 and forms as are necessary and not inconsistent with the  
30 provisions of this act.

1 Section 7. Effective date.

2 This act shall take effect July 1, 1991.