
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2659 Session of
2000

INTRODUCED BY STETLER, JULY 5, 2000

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, JULY 5, 2000

AN ACT

1 Providing limited student loan forgiveness for education
2 professionals in science and mathematics.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Science and
7 Mathematics Education Professional Loan Forgiveness Act.

8 Section 2. Findings.

9 The General Assembly finds and declares that:

10 (1) School districts throughout this Commonwealth have
11 struggled with a shortage of qualified teachers certified in
12 mathematics and/or science.

13 (2) Students in Pennsylvania and throughout the nation
14 have a great need to become proficient in mathematics and
15 science to attain success in the global marketplace.

16 (3) Incentives offered by business and industry often
17 attract away from the teaching profession talented people

1 qualified in science and mathematics.

2 (4) The Commonwealth must have a strong pool of
3 qualified secondary teachers certified in mathematics and/or
4 science.

5 (5) Providing loan forgiveness to qualified secondary
6 teachers certified in science and mathematics with a
7 commitment to having a career in education can help resolve
8 the shortage of teachers in those areas of study and ensure
9 the quality of public schools in this Commonwealth.

10 Section 3. Definitions.

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

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

16 "Program." The Science and Mathematics Education
17 Professional Loan Forgiveness Program.

18 "Qualified applicant." A person who meets the following
19 criteria:

20 (1) Is employed as a full-time permanent professional
21 secondary educator in mathematics and/or science.

22 (2) Has borrowed through the Pennsylvania Higher
23 Education Assistance Agency-administered Guaranteed Student
24 Loan Programs.

25 (3) Is a resident of this Commonwealth.

26 (4) Executes a sworn affidavit, under penalty of
27 perjury, that he or she does not have a delinquent payment
28 owing any Commonwealth agency or showing that he or she and
29 the agency have established a repayment schedule, which he or
30 she has successfully followed for 12 continuous months.

(5) Was hired by a school district in this Commonwealth on or after the effective date of this act.

"School district." Any school district in this Commonwealth.

Section 3. The Science and Mathematics Education Professional Loan Forgiveness Program.

Qualified applicants must work for a school district for at least one year before applying. They shall be eligible for forgiveness of the debt incurred through the agency-administered Guaranteed Student Loan Programs for the education necessary to successfully complete a bachelor's degree or master's degree or a doctorate degree in education. For each calendar year that the applicant is a full-time permanent professional educator in the school district in science or mathematics, the agency shall forgive \$2,500 of the applicant's loan up until the time the loan is fully forgiven. Payments shall be made in accordance with the procedures established by the agency; however, the applicant does not have to repay any portion of the loan as long as he or she qualifies for forgiveness. A loan forgiveness award shall not be made for a loan that is in default, although an applicant may qualify once he or she and the agency reach agreement on a formal repayment schedule and the applicant has successfully followed that schedule for 12 continuous months.

Section 4. Responsibility of agency.

The agency shall administer the program established under this act and promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this act.

Section 5. Effective date.

This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.