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Memorandum

TO: All Members of the House of Representatives
FROM: Representative
DATE: March 12, 2012
SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship Memo for REACH for Arts & Culture

In the near future, I will be introducing legislation that would establish REACH for Arts & Culture, a smaller and more targeted version of the Reliable Educational Assistance for College Hopefuls (REACH) program to assist students with the cost of attending college in Pennsylvania. The Arts & Culture economy is growing in Pennsylvania, and this scholarship program will play an important role in ensuring there are exceptional professionals, trained in our Commonwealth, to help it grow.

As the costs associated with a college education continue to climb at unprecedented levels, many families and students are finding it more difficult to adequately finance their higher education needs and aspirations. Tuition at Pennsylvania's state-owned universities is among the highest in the nation, with a 4.5% increase being announced in July of this year. In response to this, the REACH for Arts & Culture program would be a merit-based scholarship awarded to eligible students for the full cost of tuition at any of the 14 state-owned institutions of higher education within the Commonwealth. Additionally, the program would award scholarships to students attending both state-related and private institutions equal to the average tuition at state-owned universities.

Pennsylvania's REACH for Arts & Culture program would award students scholarships if certain criteria are met. These include, but are not limited to, cumulative high school GPA of 3.0, satisfactory school attendance, and completing 100 hours of community service. Furthermore, students would have to maintain a minimum grade point average through the duration of the scholarship, as well as complete a minimum amount of community service hours.

It is my sincere hope that you will join me in this effort to make college more affordable to students across this state. If you would like to co-sponsor this important piece of legislation, please contact Tajuanna Franklin in my Harrisburg at 717.787.1354 or tfranklin@pahouse.net.