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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 Business & Entrepreneurship

In the near future, I will be introducing legislation that would establish REACH for Business & Entrepreneurship, 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. A competitive, growth economy will only be realized in the Commonwealth if we can make a college career in business and entrepreneurship a reality for all exceptional students who have earned their academic right to post-secondary education. Entrepreneurs come from every sector of society, but unfortunately the high cost of college acts as a roadblock to many of our potential future business leaders. REACH for Business and Entrepreneurship removes one important barrier by making college affordable for every student who works hard and attains a high level of academic achievement.

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 Business & Entrepreneurship 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 Business & Entrepreneurship 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 Office at 717.787.1354 or tfranklin@pahouse.net.