

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 924 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY ROEBUCK, D. EVANS, DePASQUALE, FREEMAN, GALLOWAY,
GRUCELA, JOSEPHS, W. KELLER, KING, KORTZ, LEACH, McILHATTAN,
MELIO, MURT, MYERS, M. O'BRIEN, PALLONE, PARKER, PAYTON,
PRESTON, READSHAW, SOLOBAY, STURLA, TANGRETTI, THOMAS, WALKO
AND YOUNGBLOOD, MARCH 29, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, MARCH 29, 2007

AN ACT

1 Establishing and providing for the implementation and
2 administration of the Call Me Mister Program; providing for
3 powers and duties of the Department of Education and the
4 State Board of Education; and making an appropriation.

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

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Call Me
9 Mister Program Act.

10 Section 2. Findings.

11 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

12 (1) More than one in every four black men, 28.5% is
13 expected to be incarcerated in a Federal or state prison at
14 some point in his lifetime.

15 (2) African-American males between 18 and 24 years of
16 age are eight times more likely than white males to be
17 murdered.

1 (3) Black males make up nearly 75% of the total prison
2 population and due to either present or past incarceration
3 are the most socially disenfranchised group of American
4 citizens in the country today.

5 (4) A black male born in 1991 has a 29% chance of
6 spending time in prison at some point in his life. The figure
7 for white males is 4% and for Hispanics, 16%.

8 (5) In 1954 at the time of the historic Brown v. Board
9 of Education decision, African Americans constituted about
10 30% of persons admitted to Federal and state prisons, and
11 that number has increased to over 50%.

12 (6) There are presently more African-American males in
13 prison than college.

14 (7) African-American males make up less than 1% of our
15 elementary school teachers.

16 (8) A program needs to be created that is dedicated to
17 ensuring college preparation, leadership development,
18 community responsibility and successful life planning for
19 African-American males that will enable them to become
20 certified elementary school teachers in Pennsylvania's public
21 schools and serve as role models to economically and socially
22 disadvantaged youth.

23 (9) The intent of this legislation is to provide funds
24 to an approved institution of higher education in this
25 Commonwealth for the purpose of offering and facilitating the
26 Call Me Mister Program to provide tuition grants for African-
27 American males or other qualified applicants who wish to
28 complete a teacher certification program and become a fully
29 certified elementary school teacher in a public school in
30 this Commonwealth.

1 Section 3. Definitions.

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

5 "Approved institution of higher education." A postsecondary
6 institution in this Commonwealth authorized to award teaching
7 degrees chosen by the Secretary of Education to administer the
8 program.

9 "Board." The State Board of Education.

10 "Department." The Department of Education of the
11 Commonwealth.

12 "Program." The Call Me Mister Program established by this
13 act.

14 "Secretary." The Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth.

15 Section 4. Establishment.

16 (a) Establishment.--There is hereby established in the
17 department the Call Me Mister Program.

18 (b) Contract.--The secretary shall in conformance with
19 policies, standards, rules and regulations adopted by the board
20 contract with an approved institution of higher education to
21 administer the program. The program shall include the award of
22 tuition grants to African-American males and other applicants
23 who qualify for the program. The contract entered into shall be
24 used to implement the program and to fulfill the mission of the
25 program with joint responsibility by the department and the
26 approved institution of higher education.

27 Section 5. Application by approved institution of higher
28 education.

29 An approved institution of higher education seeking to
30 administer the program shall submit an application in such form

1 and at such time as the department may require. An application
2 for the program contract shall include a description of the
3 nature and the method by which all funds granted will be used by
4 the applicant institution to contribute to the provision,
5 maintenance or improvement of the program designed to accomplish
6 the goals of this act.

7 Section 6. Student eligibility.

8 Entry into the program is open to any Commonwealth resident
9 capable of facilitating the achievement of the program
10 objectives as set forth in section 2.

11 Section 7. Program criteria.

12 The department in conjunction with the approved institution
13 of higher education awarded the contract to administer the
14 program shall establish the program guidelines and admission
15 criteria which shall do at a minimum the following:

- 16 (1) Establish eligibility requirements.
- 17 (2) Establish admissions and application requirements.
- 18 (3) Provide program structure.
- 19 (4) Determine specific program goals.
- 20 (5) Establish criteria for selection of qualified
21 applicants.
- 22 (6) Establish criteria for awarding tuition grants.

23 Section 8. Administrative cost limitation.

24 No more than 5% of the annual amount appropriated for the
25 program may be used for administrative costs under this act.

26 Section 9. Appropriation.

27 The sum of \$1,000,000, or as much thereof as may be
28 necessary, is hereby appropriated to the Department of Education
29 for the fiscal year July 1, 2007, to June 30, 2008, to carry out
30 the purposes of this act.

1 Section 10. Effective date.

2 This act shall take effect July 1, 2007, or immediately,

3 whichever is later.