

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 86th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2007
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 885

5 By: Senators Argue, Baker
6 By: Representative Kenney
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

10 AN ACT TO MODIFY THE STATE TEACHER ASSISTANCE
11 RESOURCE PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
12

Subtitle

14 TO MODIFY THE STATE TEACHER ASSISTANCE
15 RESOURCE PROGRAM.
16
17

18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
19

20 6-81-1501. Title.

21 This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "State Teacher
22 Assistance Resource Program".
23

24 6-81-1502. Definitions.

25 For purposes of this subchapter:

26 (1) "Five-year teacher education program" means a program within
27 a regionally accredited institution of higher education in Arkansas that will
28 lead to obtaining a teacher certification and is designed for completion in
29 five (5) years with an award of a master's degree in education;

30 (2) "Four-year teacher education program" means a program within
31 a regionally accredited institution of higher education in Arkansas that will
32 lead to obtaining a teacher certification and is designed for completion in
33 four (4) years with an award of a baccalaureate degree in education;

34 (3)(A) "Master of Arts in Teaching program" means a program
35 within a regionally accredited institution of higher education in Arkansas
36 that will allow graduate students to teach in a middle school or secondary



1 school while obtaining licensure.

2 (B) "Master of Arts in Teaching" shall include persons who
3 are licensed in Arkansas through a program of nontraditional licensure; and

4 (4) "Two-year teacher education program" means a program within
5 a regionally accredited institution of higher education in Arkansas that will
6 introduce students to the profession of teaching.

7

8 6-81-1503. Creation - Purpose.

9 (a) There is created the State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

10 (b) While in college, the state teacher assistance resource should be
11 exposed to a range of extracurricular activities geared toward instilling a
12 strong motivation not only to remain in teaching but also to provide
13 leadership for tomorrow's schools.

14

15 6-81-1504. Administration of and authority of the Department of Higher
16 Education.

17 (a) The State Teacher Assistance Resource Program shall be
18 administered by the Department of Higher Education.

19 (b) The department shall adopt standards for awarding the forgivable
20 loans to ensure that students in their sophomore, junior, or senior year who
21 are actively pursuing a degree in teaching, are admitted to a teacher
22 education program, or are enrolled in a Master of Arts in Teaching program
23 with the best potential for success receive a forgivable loan.

24 (c) The department shall administer the State Teacher Assistance
25 Resource Program in cooperation with teacher training institutions selected
26 by the department.

27 (d)(1) The requirements of this subchapter are contingent on the
28 funding available for the State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

29 (2) The department may use funds appropriated for the Emergency
30 Secondary Education Loan Program, § 6-81-501 et seq. [repealed], and other
31 available funds to fund the State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

32 (e) The department may determine the necessary procedures for the
33 awarding of forgivable loans should the number of eligible applicants and
34 recipients exceed the funds available, but priority consideration shall be
35 given based on a combination of factors, including, but not limited to:

36 (1) Full-time enrollment;

1 recipient is in a five-year teacher education program in the amount of six
 2 thousand dollars (\$6,000) per year for a junior or senior admitted to a
 3 teacher education program who commits to teach in a public school located in
 4 a geographical area of the state designated as having a critical shortage of
 5 teachers and in a subject matter area designated as having a critical
 6 shortage of teachers;

7 (C) A loan repayment for federal student loans in the
 8 amount of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) per year for each year a certified
 9 teacher who graduated from a teacher education program after April 2004
 10 teaches in a public school located in a geographical area of the state
 11 designated as having a critical shortage of teachers; ~~or~~

12 (D) A loan repayment for federal student loans in the
 13 amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) per year for each year a certified
 14 teacher who graduated from a teacher education program after April 2004
 15 teaches in a public school located in a geographical area of the state
 16 designated as having a critical shortage of teachers and in a subject matter
 17 designated as having a critical shortage of teachers;

18 (E) A grant in the amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000)
 19 for a freshman who:

20 (i) Is enrolled in an institution of higher
 21 education in the state; and

22 (ii) Who commits to teach in a public school located
 23 in a geographical area of the state designated as having a critical shortage
 24 of teachers or in a subject matter area designated as having a critical
 25 shortage of teachers; or

26 (F) A grant in the amount of one thousand five hundred
 27 dollars (\$1,500) for a freshman who:

28 (i) Is actively pursuing a degree in teaching at an
 29 institution of higher education in the state; and

30 (ii) Who commits to teach in a public school located
 31 in a geographical area of the state designated as having a critical shortage
 32 of teachers or in a subject matter area designated as having a critical
 33 shortage of teachers.

34 (2) The Department of Education shall set the term of the loan
 35 with the goal of assisting the recipient to complete the recipient's teacher
 36 education program.

1 (3) No person receiving a forgivable loan under subdivision
2 (a)(1)(A) or (B) of this section shall be eligible to receive a loan
3 repayment under subdivision (a)(1)(C) or (D) of this section.

4 (b)(1) A student may receive a State Teacher Assistance Resource
5 Program and Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship or Arkansas Governor's
6 Distinguished Scholarships to the extent the receipt of both awards does not
7 violate the provisions of § 6-80-105.

8 (2) For the purpose of compliance with § 6-80-105, the
9 forgivable loans under this program shall be considered public funds.

10 (3) No student may participate in more than one (1) forgivable
11 loan program supported with state money.

12 (c) Loan recipients shall execute a note made payable to the
13 Department of Higher Education that shall bear interest at the rate to be
14 determined by the department at the time of the award to begin accruing on
15 September 1 after completion of the program or immediately after termination
16 of the forgivable loan, whichever is earlier.

17 (d) The forgivable loan may be terminated if:

18 (1) The recipient withdraws from school;

19 (2) The recipient does not meet the standards set by the
20 department; or

21 (3) For other reasons as designated by the department.

22 (e)(1) Within nine (9) months after completion of the teacher
23 education program, the recipient of a forgivable loan under the State Teacher
24 Assistance Resource Program shall begin to teach in a public school in the
25 state in accordance with the student's initial commitment or shall begin to
26 repay the loan in accordance with the terms of a note executed under
27 subsection (c) of this section.

28 (2) The department shall forgive one (1) year of the loan for
29 each consecutive year the recipient teaches full time in a shortage area in
30 accordance with the terms of the recipient's initial commitment beginning
31 nine (9) months from the date of graduation.

32 (3) The department may grant loan repayment deferrals to
33 students who enrolled in masters or doctoral programs after completion of a
34 four-year or five-year teacher education program or for other just cause as
35 determined by the department.

36 (4) The department may also forgive the loan if it finds that it

1 is impossible for the recipient to teach in an Arkansas public school as
 2 required because of the death or permanent disability of the recipient.

3 (f) Loan recipients required to repay loans as provided in subsection
 4 (e) of this section who fail to meet their repayment obligations may have
 5 added to their total obligation any costs for collection of the debt and
 6 shall have their teaching license in Arkansas revoked by the State Board of
 7 Education.

8 (g)(1) All funds appropriated to or otherwise received by the State
 9 Teacher Assistance Resource Program for forgivable loans, all funds received
 10 as repayment of forgivable loans, and all interest earned on these funds
 11 shall be placed in a revolving fund.

12 (2) This revolving fund shall be used for forgivable loans
 13 granted under the State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

14 (h)(1) The department, as administrator for the State Teacher
 15 Assistance Resource Program, may use up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000)
 16 annually from the fund balance for costs associated with administration of
 17 the State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

18 (2) These funds are in addition to funds required for collection
 19 costs related to loan repayments.

20 (i) Any recipient of an emergency secondary
 21 education loan, § 6-81-501 et seq. [repealed], may qualify for a forgivable
 22 loan under the State Teacher Assistance Resource Program and shall continue
 23 to fulfill any existing obligation under the terms of any loans received
 24 under the Emergency Secondary Education Loan Program, § 6-81-501 et seq.
 25 [repealed].

26 (j) The department shall promulgate regulations necessary for the
 27 implementation of the State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

28
 29 6-81-1507. State Teacher Assistance Resource Commission.

30 (a) There is established a commission to be known as the State Teacher
 31 Assistance Resource Commission.

32 (b) The commission shall consist of eleven (11) members as follows:

- 33 (1) The Lieutenant Governor, or his or her designee;
- 34 (2) The chair of the State Board of Education, or his or her
 35 designee;
- 36 (3) Three (3) persons appointed by the Governor;

