

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0085

Teacher shortage loan repayment program.

Sponsored by: Joint Education Interim Committee

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to teachers; establishing the Wyoming
 2 teacher shortage loan repayment program; specifying
 3 eligibility criteria; prescribing procedures and repayment
 4 of loans; providing for program administration by the
 5 Wyoming higher education assistance authority; sunsetting
 6 the program; providing an appropriation; providing for
 7 transfer of appropriations and administration under
 8 specified conditions; and providing for an effective date.

9

10 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

11

12 **Section 1.** W.S. 21-7-601 is created to read:

13

14

ARTICLE 6

15

WYOMING TEACHER SHORTAGE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

16

1 **21-7-601. Wyoming teacher shortage loan repayment**
2 **program; eligibility criteria; procedures; program**
3 **reporting.**

4
5 (a) The Wyoming teacher shortage loan repayment
6 program is created to be administered by the Wyoming higher
7 education assistance authority established under W.S.
8 21-16-703. Applicants shall be residents of this state or
9 graduates of a Wyoming high school and may apply for loans
10 from the program in accordance with this section.

11

12 (b) To qualify for a loan under this section, the
13 applicant shall first:

14

15 (i) Be enrolled in good standing in a teacher
16 education program at the University of Wyoming leading to
17 certification as a special education, math or science
18 teacher;

19

20 (ii) Have class standing of at least a junior
21 for the first semester for which application for a loan
22 under this program is made;

23

24 (iii) Apply for federal financial assistance.

1

2 (c) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated
3 for this program, loans under this section may be granted
4 to qualified applicants to pay the unmet financial need, as
5 determined by the Wyoming higher education assistance
6 authority, of attendance at the teacher education program
7 specified under paragraph (b) (i) of this section.

8

9 (d) A loan provided under this section shall not
10 exceed the cost of attendance for the approved program,
11 reduced by the amount of any Pell or other federal grant
12 and any employer based financial assistance received by the
13 applicant.

14

15 (e) A recipient of a loan under this section may
16 repay the loan without cash payment by working in Wyoming
17 as a special education, math or science teacher in a
18 Wyoming public school as provided in subsection (f) of this
19 section. To qualify as repayment under this subsection,
20 work shall be performed within the minimum amount of time
21 necessary to repay the loan, plus two (2) years, which
22 shall begin with the calendar month following the month in
23 which the student completed the academic program.

24

1 (f) Qualified work under subsection (e) of this
2 section shall be credited such that the student's loan
3 balance is reduced on the basis of one (1) year of full-
4 time employment repaying the loan balance for one (1)
5 academic year of full-time enrollment. Qualified work
6 shall be credited on a proportional basis to the loan
7 balance.

8

9 (g) Any recipient of a loan under this section who
10 fails:

11

12 (i) To complete the academic program for which
13 the loan was provided shall commence cash repayment of the
14 loan no later than forty-five (45) days after the recipient
15 leaves the academic program;

16

17 (ii) To obtain employment in the targeted
18 occupation for which the person received the education
19 within ninety (90) days after successfully obtaining the
20 appropriate certification, shall commence cash repayment of
21 the loan within one hundred eighty (180) days after
22 successfully obtaining the appropriate certification;

23

1 (iii) To obtain the appropriate certification
2 within one hundred eighty (180) days after completion of
3 the program shall commence cash repayment of the loan.

4
5 (h) Loan repayment options under this section may be
6 deferred for a period not to exceed four (4) years while a
7 loan recipient is serving on full-time active duty with any
8 branch of the military services of the United States.

9
10 (j) The Wyoming higher education assistance authority
11 shall have the powers and duties specified under W.S.
12 21-16-705 to implement this section and shall establish
13 terms and conditions of loans issued under this section,
14 including:

15
16 (i) Interest rates and loan terms;

17
18 (ii) The form and process for loan application,
19 review and award;

20
21 (iii) Criteria under which students may be
22 relieved from having to repay loans and interest thereon,
23 in whole or in part, where the requirement to repay would
24 cause undue hardship.

1

2 (k) Funding of the loan program established under
3 this section shall be by appropriation of the legislature.
4 The authority shall transfer approved loan amounts to the
5 University of Wyoming.

6

7 (m) Cash repayment of loans and interest thereon
8 shall be credited to the general fund.

9

10 (n) The authority shall annually review the loan
11 program established under this section and report to the
12 governor and the legislature in accordance with W.S.
13 9-2-1014, regarding program results, funds received and
14 loans issued during the preceding academic year, together
15 with the status of all outstanding loan commitments and
16 repayments under the program. The report required under
17 this subsection shall include information submitted by the
18 professional teaching standards board regarding the impact
19 of the program on identified teacher shortage areas and
20 recommendations for modifications to the program, including
21 funding levels, to address other identified teacher
22 shortage areas.

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1 (o) This program created by this section shall expire
2 effective June 30, 2011.

3

4 (p) Notwithstanding subsection (o) of this section:

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6 (i) Any person who receives a loan under this
7 section shall continue to receive funding for the program
8 as the person remains eligible as required by this section;

9

10 (ii) Repayment of loans provided under this
11 section shall continue as specified by this section until
12 all loan obligations have been satisfied.

13

14 **Section 2.**

15

16 (a) Four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000.00) is
17 appropriated from the general fund to the Wyoming higher
18 education assistance authority to implement this act. Not
19 more than five percent (5%) of the amount appropriated
20 under this section may be used by the Wyoming higher
21 education assistance authority for administration of the
22 program, including expenses of the authority and loan
23 administration fees.

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1 (b) If responsibility for administration of the
2 Wyoming investment in nursing program under W.S. 9-2-123 is
3 transferred to another state agency by enactment of
4 legislation adopted during the 2005 general session, the
5 appropriation under this section is transferred to that
6 successor agency and the administration of the Wyoming
7 teacher shortage loan repayment program established under
8 this act shall be accordingly transferred to that successor
9 agency.

10

11 **Section 3.** This act is effective immediately upon
12 completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law
13 as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming
14 Constitution.

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16

(END)