

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.S.B. 686
By: Seliger; West
Higher Education
4/2/2015
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The 83rd Legislature created the Math and Science Scholars Loan Repayment Program and the mathematics and science teacher investment fund. This program is designed to assist Texas teachers in repaying higher education loan debt if they choose to teach math or science in a school district identified as a Title I school.

Currently, the mathematics and science teacher investment fund may receive and collect gifts, grants, and other donations. S.B. 686 allows the fund to also receive general revenue as appropriated by the legislature. (Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 686 amends current law relating to the Math and Science Scholar Loan Repayment Program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 61.9831, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 61.9831. LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED. Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to provide, in accordance with this subchapter and THECB rules, assistance in the repayment of eligible student loans for eligible persons who agree to teach mathematics or science for a specified period in schools, rather than school districts, that receive federal funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.).

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 61.9832 (a) and (c), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Requires a person, to be eligible to receive loan repayment assistance under this subchapter, to:

(1)-(4) Makes no change to these subdivisions;

(5) be:

(A) certified under Subchapter B (Certification of Educators), Chapter 21, to teach mathematics or science in a public school in this state; or

(B) teaching under a probationary teaching certificate;

Deletes existing text providing that a person, to be eligible to receive loan repayment assistance, is required to be in an educator preparation program to obtain that certification that is accredited by the State Board for Educator Certification and is provided by an institution of higher education or by a private or independent institution of higher education in this state.

(6) have been employed for at least one year as a teacher teaching mathematics or science at a public school that that receives funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.), rather than a public school located in a school district that that receives funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.);

(7)-(10) Makes no change to these subdivisions.

(c) Requires a person, to receive loan repayment assistance under this subchapter, to enter into an agreement with THECB that includes the following provisions:

(1) the person will accept an offer of full-time employment to teach mathematics or science, as applicable based on the person's certification, in a public school that receives funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.), rather than a public school located in a school district that receives funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.);

(2)-(4) Makes no change to these subdivisions.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 61.9837(b), Education Code, as follows:

(b) Provides that the fund is a dedicated account in the general revenue fund and consists of:

(1) Makes a nonsubstantive change;

(2) any amounts appropriated by the legislature for the fund; and

(3) Creates this subdivision from existing text. Makes no further change to this subdivision.

SECTION 4. Amends Sections 61.9839(a) and (b), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Authorizes an eligible person to continue to receive loan repayment assistance if the person continues to teach in a public school that receives funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.), rather than authorizing an eligible person to continue to receive loan repayment assistance if the person continues to teach in a public school described by Section 61.9832(a)(7), after the first four years of teaching service required, rather than after the first four years required for eligibility, under Section 61.9832(c)(2) (requiring the person to complete four consecutive years of employment as a full-time classroom teacher in a school described by Subdivision (1) whose primary duty is to teach mathematics or science, as applicable, based on the person's certification in order to receive loan repayment assistance under this subchapter).

(b) Prohibits the person from receiving more than 75 percent of the maximum annual amount of the loan repayment assistance as determined by THECB if an eligible person transfers to a public school that does not receive funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.), after the first four years required for eligibility under Section 61.9832(c)(2), rather than if an eligible person transfers to a public school located in a school district that does not receive funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.), after the first four years required for eligibility under Section 61.9832(c)(2).

SECTION 5. Repealer: Section 61.9837(f) (prohibiting the legislature from appropriating general revenue to the fund), Education Code.

SECTION 6. Provides that the changes in law made by this Act apply only to a loan repayment assistance agreement entered into under Subchapter II (Nursing Faculty Loan Repayment Assistance Program), Chapter 61, Education Code, as added by Chapter 1229, (S.B. 1720) Acts of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, on or after the effective date of this Act. Provides that a loan repayment assistance agreement entered into before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect immediately before that date, and the former law is continued in effect for the purpose.

SECTION 7. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.