

By: Simmons

To: Education;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2069

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-159-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO ESTABLISH THE "THREE-FOR-THREE TEACHER RELOCATION PROGRAM"; TO  
3 AUTHORIZE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO MAKE ANNUAL GRANTS TO  
4 CERTIFICATED TEACHERS WHO RELOCATE IN ORDER TO TEACH IN A CRITICAL  
5 TEACHER SHORTAGE GEOGRAPHIC SECTION OF THE STATE; TO PROVIDE  
6 CERTAIN CONDITIONS ON RECEIPT OF THE GRANT AND PENALTIES FOR  
7 BREACH OF CONTRACT; TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO  
8 PROMULGATE REGULATIONS NECESSARY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THIS  
9 ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

11 SECTION 1. Section 37-159-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
12 amended as follows:

13 37-159-5. (1) The State Board of Education shall prescribe  
14 rules and regulations which, subject to available appropriations,  
15 allow for reimbursement to the state licensed teachers, from both  
16 in-state and out-of-state, who enter into a contract for  
17 employment in a school district situated within a geographical  
18 area of the state where there exists a critical shortage of  
19 teachers, as designated by the State Board of Education, for the  
20 expense of moving when the employment necessitates the relocation  
21 of the teacher to a different geographical area than that in which  
22 the teacher resides before entering into such contract. In order  
23 to be eligible for the reimbursement, the teacher must apply to  
24 the local district and the district must obtain the prior approval

25 from the department for reimbursement before the relocation  
26 occurs. If the reimbursement is approved, the department shall  
27 provide funds to the school district to reimburse the teacher an  
28 amount not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) for the  
29 documented actual expenses incurred in the course of relocating,  
30 including the expense of any professional moving company or  
31 persons employed to assist with the move, rented moving vehicles  
32 or equipment, mileage in the amount authorized for state employees  
33 under Section 25-3-41 if the teacher used his personal vehicle or  
34 vehicles for the move, meals and such other expenses associated  
35 with the relocation in accordance with the department's  
36 established rules and regulations. No teacher may be reimbursed  
37 for moving expenses under this section on more than one occasion.

38 Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the  
39 actual residence to which the teacher relocates to be within the  
40 boundaries of the school district which has executed a contract  
41 for employment with the teacher or within the boundaries of the  
42 area designated by the State Board of Education as the critical  
43 teacher shortage area in order for the teacher to be eligible for  
44 reimbursement for his moving expenses. However, teachers must  
45 relocate within the boundaries of the State of Mississippi.

46 (2) There is hereby established the "Three-for-Three Teacher  
47 Relocation Program." To the extent of appropriations available,  
48 certificated teachers who have expressed in writing a present  
49 intention to teach in a critical teacher shortage geographic  
50 section of the state, as designated on an annual basis by the  
51 State Board of Education, shall be eligible for an annual  
52 relocation grant of Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) for each of  
53 three (3) years, in addition to the reimbursement of relocation  
54 expenses authorized under subsection (1). To be eligible to  
55 receive the annual grant, recipients shall be required to teach in

56 a school located in such critical teacher shortage geographic area  
57 for at least seventy-eight (78) school days during each of the two  
58 (2) school semesters immediately after the receipt of the grant.  
59 No recipient shall receive more than Nine Thousand Dollars  
60 (\$9,000.00) in the aggregate from this program.

61 Persons failing to meet teaching requirements in any required  
62 semester shall immediately be in breach of contract and become  
63 liable to the State Board of Education for the amount of the  
64 annual grant received for the current year, with interest accruing  
65 at the current Stafford Loan rate at the time the breach occurs,  
66 except in the case of a deferral of debt for cause by the board,  
67 after which period of deferral, teaching duties required hereunder  
68 will be resumed. If the claim for repayment of such grant is  
69 placed in the hands of an attorney for collection after default,  
70 then the obligor shall be liable for an additional amount equal to  
71 a reasonable attorney's fee.

72 Failure to repay any grant and interest that becomes due  
73 shall be cause for the revocation of a person's teaching  
74 certificate by the State Department of Education.

75 All monies repaid to the State Board of Education hereunder  
76 shall be added to the appropriations made for purposes of this  
77 section, and said appropriations shall not lapse.

78 The State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations  
79 necessary for the proper administration of this section.

80 If insufficient funds are available for requested grants to  
81 qualified applicants during any fiscal year, priority  
82 consideration shall be given to persons receiving previous grants  
83 and participating in the program.

84        The State Board of Education shall make an annual report to  
85 the Legislature enumerating the relocation grants awarded, the  
86 names of persons to whom granted, and the teaching location of  
87 applicants.

88        SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
89 and after July 1, 2000.