

By: Representative Currie

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 1266

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-55, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO AUTHORIZE THE CONTINUATION OF THE CRITICAL NEEDS TEACHER  
3 FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM AS A FOUR-YEAR REPAYMENT PROGRAM AND TO  
4 ALLOW APPLICANTS TO RESIDE OR BE EMPLOYED IN ANY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA  
5 OF THE STATE UNDER A SEVEN-YEAR REPAYMENT PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED  
6 PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-106-55, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
9 amended as follows:

10 37-106-55. (1) There is established the "Critical Needs  
11 Teacher Forgivable Loan Program," the purpose of which is to  
12 attract qualified teachers to those geographical areas of the  
13 state and those subject areas of the curriculum where there exists  
14 a critical shortage of teachers by awarding forgivable loans to  
15 persons declaring an intention to serve in the teaching field who  
16 actually render service to the state while possessing an  
17 appropriate teaching license.

18 (2) \* \* \* The Critical Needs Teacher Scholarship  
19 Program \* \* \* is hereby continued for applicants after the \* \* \*  
20 2017-2018 academic year, and in subsequent years \* \* \* subject to



21 appropriation therefor by the Legislature. Any individual who is  
22 enrolled in or accepted for enrollment at a teacher education  
23 program approved by the State Board of Education or other program  
24 at a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher learning  
25 in the State of Mississippi and has a passing score on the Praxis  
26 I Basic Skills Test who expresses in writing an intention to teach  
27 in a geographical area of the state or a subject area of the  
28 public school curriculum in which there exists a critical shortage  
29 of teachers, as designated by the State Board of Education, shall  
30 be eligible for a forgivable loan to be applied toward the costs  
31 of the individual's college education. The annual amount of the  
32 award shall be equal to the total cost for tuition, room and  
33 meals, books, materials and fees at the college or university in  
34 which the student is enrolled, not to exceed an amount equal to  
35 the highest total cost of tuition, room and meals, books,  
36 materials and fees assessed by a state institution of higher  
37 learning during that school year. Awards made to nonresidents of  
38 the state shall not include any amount assessed by the college or  
39 university for out-of-state tuition.

40 (3) Awards granted under the Critical Needs Teacher  
41 Forgivable Loan Program shall be available to both full-time and  
42 part-time students. Students enrolling on a full-time basis may  
43 receive a maximum of two (2) annual awards. The maximum number of  
44 awards that may be made to students attending school on a  
45 part-time basis, and the maximum time period for part-time



46 students to complete the number of academic hours necessary to  
47 obtain a baccalaureate degree in education, shall be established  
48 by rules and regulations promulgated by the board. Critical Needs  
49 Teacher Forgivable Loans shall not be based upon an applicant's  
50 financial need.

51 (4) Awards granted under the Critical Needs Teacher  
52 Forgivable Loan Program shall be made available to nontraditional  
53 licensed teachers showing a documented need for student loan  
54 repayment and employed in those school districts designated by the  
55 State Board of Education as a geographical area of the state or in  
56 a subject area of the curriculum in which there is a critical  
57 shortage of teachers. The maximum annual amount of this repayment  
58 should not exceed Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) and the  
59 maximum time period for repayment shall be no more than four (4)  
60 years.

61 (5) Except in those cases where employment positions may not  
62 be available upon completion of licensure requirements, at the  
63 beginning of the first school year in which a recipient of a  
64 Critical Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan is eligible for employment  
65 as a licensed teacher or a nontraditional teacher intern pursuant  
66 to Section 37-3-2(6)(b), that person shall begin to render service  
67 as a licensed teacher or nontraditional teacher intern in a public  
68 school district in a geographical area of the state or a subject  
69 area of the curriculum where there is a critical shortage of  
70 teachers, as approved by the State Board of Education.



71           (6) Effective with the 2018-2019 academic year, any  
72 individual who is enrolled in or accepted for enrollment at a  
73 teacher education program approved by the State Board of Education  
74 or other program at a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of  
75 higher learning in the State of Mississippi and has a passing  
76 score on the Praxis I Basic Skills Test who expresses in writing  
77 an intention to teach in any geographical area of the State of  
78 Mississippi shall be eligible for a forgivable loan to be applied  
79 toward the costs of the individual's college education under the  
80 same terms and conditions as prescribed for the Critical Needs  
81 Teacher Forgivable Loan Program under this section, with the  
82 exception that the maximum time period for repayment shall be no  
83 more than seven (7) years.

84           ( \* \* \*7) Failure to repay any loan and interest that  
85 becomes due shall be cause for the revocation of a person's  
86 teaching license by the State Board of Education.

87           ( \* \* \*8) Repayment and conversion terms shall be the same  
88 as those outlined in Section 37-106-53.

89           ( \* \* \*9) The board shall promulgate rules and regulations  
90 necessary for the proper administration of the Critical Needs  
91 Teacher Forgivable Loan Program and the Teacher Forgivable Loan  
92 Program authorized under subsection (6) of this section.

93           ( \* \* \*10) The State Board of Education shall compile and  
94 report, in consultation with the board, an annual report with  
95 findings and recommendations to the legislative committees on



96 education by December 1, \* \* \* 2018, and annually thereafter, on  
97 the following:

98 (a) The number of participants in the Critical Needs  
99 Teacher Forgivable Loan Program, by institution and by freshman,  
100 sophomore, junior and senior level;

101 (b) The number of nontraditional teacher license  
102 program participants;

103 (c) The number of individuals who completed the  
104 Critical Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan Program and the program  
105 authorized in subsection (6) of this section and the school  
106 district in which they are employed;

107 (d) The number of individuals who are in default of  
108 their obligation under the Critical Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan  
109 Program and the status of their obligation;

110 (e) The number of participants in the program who have  
111 successfully completed the Praxis examination in their junior  
112 year; and

113 (f) The number of noneducation majors participating in  
114 the program.

115 ( \* \* \* 11) Where local school districts exhibit financial  
116 need, the State Department of Education may, subject to the  
117 availability of funds specifically appropriated therefor by the  
118 Legislature, provide financial assistance for the recruitment of  
119 certified teachers in an amount not to exceed Seventy-five  
120 Thousand Dollars (\$75,000.00) annually.



121           This section shall stand repealed July 1, 2020.

122           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
123 and after July 1, 2018.

