

By: Senator(s) DeBar

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2353

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-55, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO EXTEND THE DATE OF REPEAL ON THE PROVISION CREATING THE
3 CRITICAL NEEDS TEACHER FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED
4 PURPOSES.

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

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

8 37-106-55. (1) There is established the "Critical Needs
9 Teacher Forgivable Loan Program," the purpose of which is to
10 attract qualified teachers to those geographical areas of the
11 state and those subject areas of the curriculum where there exists
12 a critical shortage of teachers by awarding forgivable loans to
13 persons declaring an intention to serve in the teaching field who
14 actually render service to the state while possessing an
15 appropriate teaching license.

16 (2) Individuals shall not be eligible to enroll in the
17 Critical Needs Teacher Scholarship Program after the 2014-2015
18 academic year, and in subsequent years individuals are encouraged
19 to apply to the Teaching Fellows Program established in Section



20 37-106-77. Any individual who is enrolled in or accepted for
21 enrollment at a teacher education program approved by the State
22 Board of Education or other program at a baccalaureate
23 degree-granting institution of higher learning in the State of
24 Mississippi and has a passing score on the Praxis I Basic Skills
25 Test who expresses in writing an intention to teach in a
26 geographical area of the state or a subject area of the public
27 school curriculum in which there exists a critical shortage of
28 teachers, as designated by the State Board of Education, shall be
29 eligible for a forgivable loan to be applied toward the costs of
30 the individual's college education. The annual amount of the
31 award shall be equal to the total cost for tuition, room and
32 meals, books, materials and fees at the college or university in
33 which the student is enrolled, not to exceed an amount equal to
34 the highest total cost of tuition, room and meals, books,
35 materials and fees assessed by a state institution of higher
36 learning during that school year. Awards made to nonresidents of
37 the state shall not include any amount assessed by the college or
38 university for out-of-state tuition.

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



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

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

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



70 (6) Failure to repay any loan and interest that becomes due
71 shall be cause for the revocation of a person's teaching license
72 by the State Board of Education.

73 (7) Repayment and conversion terms shall be the same as
74 those outlined in Section 37-106-53.

75 (8) The board shall promulgate rules and regulations
76 necessary for the proper administration of the Critical Needs
77 Teacher Forgivable Loan Program.

78 (9) The State Board of Education shall compile and report,
79 in consultation with the board, an annual report with findings and
80 recommendations to the legislative committees on education by
81 December 1, 2003, and annually thereafter, on the following:

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

85 (b) The number of nontraditional teacher license
86 program participants;

87 (c) The number of individuals who completed the
88 Critical Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan Program and the school
89 district in which they are employed;

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



93 (e) The number of participants in the program who have
94 successfully completed the Praxis examination in their junior
95 year; and

96 (f) The number of noneducation majors participating in
97 the program.

98 (10) Where local school districts exhibit financial need,
99 the State Department of Education may, subject to the availability
100 of funds specifically appropriated therefor by the Legislature,
101 provide financial assistance for the recruitment of certified
102 teachers in an amount not to exceed Seventy-five Thousand Dollars
103 (\$75,000.00) annually.

104 This section shall stand repealed July 1, * * * 2026.

105 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
106 and after July 1, 2020.

