

**Adopted
COMMITTEE AMENDMENT NO 1 PROPOSED TO**

Senate Bill No. 2682

BY: Committee

**Amend by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting
in lieu thereof the following:**

21 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-159-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
22 reenacted as follows:

23 37-159-1. Sections 37-159-1 through 37-159-19 shall be known
24 and may be cited as the "Mississippi Critical Teacher Shortage Act
25 of 1998."

26 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-159-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
27 reenacted as follows:

28 37-159-5. The State Board of Education shall prescribe rules
29 and regulations which, subject to available appropriations, allow
30 for reimbursement to the state licensed teachers, from both in



31 state and out of state, who enter into a contract for employment
32 in a school district situated within a geographical area of the
33 state where there exists a critical shortage of teachers, as
34 designated by the State Board of Education, for the expense of
35 moving when the employment necessitates the relocation of the
36 teacher to a different geographical area than that in which the
37 teacher resides before entering into such contract. In order to
38 be eligible for the reimbursement, the teacher must apply to the
39 local district and the district must obtain the prior approval
40 from the department for reimbursement before the relocation
41 occurs. If the reimbursement is approved, the department shall
42 provide funds to the school district to reimburse the teacher an
43 amount not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) for the
44 documented actual expenses incurred in the course of relocating,
45 including the expense of any professional moving company or
46 persons employed to assist with the move, rented moving vehicles
47 or equipment, mileage in the amount authorized for state employees
48 under Section 25-3-41 if the teacher used his personal vehicle or
49 vehicles for the move, meals and such other expenses associated
50 with the relocation in accordance with the department's
51 established rules and regulations. No teacher may be reimbursed
52 for moving expenses under this section on more than one (1)
53 occasion.

54 Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the
55 actual residence to which the teacher relocates to be within the



56 boundaries of the school district which has executed a contract
57 for employment with the teacher or within the boundaries of the
58 area designated by the State Board of Education as the critical
59 teacher shortage area in order for the teacher to be eligible for
60 reimbursement for his moving expenses. However, teachers must
61 relocate within the boundaries of the State of Mississippi.

62 **SECTION 3.** Section 37-159-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
63 reenacted as follows:

64 37-159-7. The school board of any school district situated
65 within a geographical area of the state where there exists a
66 critical shortage of teachers, as designated by the State Board of
67 Education, in its discretion, may reimburse persons who interview
68 for employment as a licensed teacher with the district for the
69 mileage and other actual expenses incurred in the course of travel
70 to and from the interview by such persons at the rate authorized
71 for county and municipal employees under Section 25-3-41. Any
72 reimbursement by a school board under this section shall be paid
73 from funds other than adequate education program funds.

74 **SECTION 4.** Section 37-159-9, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
75 reenacted as follows:

76 37-159-9. (1) There is established the University Assisted
77 Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grant Program within the State
78 Department of Education. The purposes of the program shall be to
79 attract additional qualified teachers to those geographical areas
80 of the state where there exists a critical shortage of teachers



81 and to retain the qualified teachers already serving as licensed
82 teachers in geographical critical teacher shortage areas by making
83 available scholarships to persons working towards a Master of
84 Education degree or an Educational Specialist degree at an
85 institution of higher learning whose teacher education program is
86 approved by the State Board of Education.

87 (2) Any institution of higher learning in the State of
88 Mississippi which offers a Master of Education degree or an
89 Educational Specialist degree may apply to the department for
90 participation in the program. As part of the program,
91 participating institutions shall collaborate with the Mississippi
92 Teacher Center to identify, recruit and place teacher education
93 graduates, from both within the state and out of state, in school
94 districts situated within those areas of the state where there
95 exists a critical shortage of teachers, as designated by the State
96 Board of Education.

97 (3) The State Department of Education shall provide funds to
98 participating institutions of higher learning for the purpose of
99 awarding scholarships to qualified persons pursuing a Master of
100 Education degree or an Educational Specialist degree at such
101 institutions while rendering service to the state as a licensed
102 teacher in a school district in a geographical area of the state
103 where there exists a critical shortage of teachers, as approved by
104 the State Board of Education. The financial scholarship shall be
105 applied to the total cost for tuition, books, materials and fees



106 at the institution in which the student is enrolled, not to exceed
107 an amount equal to the highest total cost of tuition, books,
108 materials and fees assessed by a state institution of higher
109 learning during that school year. Teachers who relocate within
110 Mississippi from out of state in order to participate in the
111 program shall be classified as residents of the state for tuition
112 purposes.

113 (4) Students awarded financial scholarships under the
114 University Assisted Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grant
115 Program may receive such awards for a maximum of four (4) school
116 years; however, the maximum number of awards which may be made
117 shall not exceed the length of time required to complete the
118 number of academic hours necessary to obtain a Master of Education
119 degree or an Educational Specialist degree. Financial
120 scholarships under the program shall not be based upon an
121 applicant's eligibility for financial aid.

122 (5) Persons relocating to a geographical area of the state
123 where there exists a critical shortage of teachers, as approved by
124 the State Board of Education, to participate in the University
125 Assisted Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grant Program shall be
126 eligible for reimbursement for their moving expenses to the
127 critical teacher shortage area from the State Board of Education.
128 The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules and
129 regulations necessary for the administration of the relocation



130 expense reimbursement component of the University Assisted Teacher
131 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program.

132 (6) Subject to the availability of funds, the State Board of
133 Education may provide for professional development and support
134 services as may be necessary for the retention of teachers
135 participating in the program in those geographical areas of the
136 state where there exists a critical shortage of teachers.

137 (7) Any person participating in the program who fails to
138 complete a program of study that will enable that person to obtain
139 a Master of Education degree or Educational Specialist degree
140 shall become liable immediately to the State Board of Education
141 for the sum of all awards made to that person under the program,
142 plus interest accruing at the current Stafford Loan rate at the
143 time the person abrogates his participation in the program.

144 (8) As a condition for participation in the program, a
145 teacher shall agree to employment as a licensed teacher in a
146 school district located in a geographical area of the state where
147 there exists a critical shortage of teachers, as designated by the
148 State Board of Education, for a period of not less than three (3)
149 years, which shall include those years of service rendered while
150 obtaining the Master of Education degree or Educational Specialist
151 degree. However, for any person who obtained a Baccalaureate
152 degree in education with a financial scholarship under the
153 Critical Needs Teacher Scholarship Program and who entered the
154 University Assisted Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grant



155 Program before rendering service as a teacher, the period of
156 employment for the purposes of this subsection shall be two (2)
157 years, in addition to the employment commitment required under the
158 Critical Needs Teacher Scholarship Program. Service rendered by a
159 participant as a licensed teacher in a school district in a
160 geographical critical teacher shortage area before that teacher
161 becomes a participant in the program may not be considered to
162 fulfill the employment commitment required under this subsection.
163 Any person failing to comply with this employment commitment in
164 any required school year shall immediately be in breach of
165 contract and become liable immediately to the State Department of
166 Education for the sum of all scholarships awarded and relocation
167 expenses granted to that person, less one-third (1/3) of the
168 amount of that sum for each year that service was rendered, or for
169 those persons whose required period of employment is two (2)
170 years, less one-half (1/2) of the amount of that sum for each year
171 that service was rendered, plus interest accruing at the current
172 Stafford Loan rate at the time the breach occurs, except in the
173 case of a deferral for cause by the State Board of Education when
174 there is no employment position immediately available upon the
175 teacher's obtaining of the Master of Education degree or
176 Educational Specialist degree. After the period of such deferral,
177 the person shall begin or resume the required teaching duties or
178 shall become liable to the board under this subsection. If a
179 claim for repayment under this subsection is placed in the hands



180 of an attorney for collection after default, then the obligor
181 shall be liable for an additional amount equal to a reasonable
182 attorney's fee.

183 (9) All funds received by the State Department of Education
184 from the repayment of scholarship awards and relocation expenses
185 by program participants shall be deposited in the Mississippi
186 Critical Teacher Shortage Fund.

187 (10) The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules and
188 regulations necessary for the proper administration of the
189 University Assisted Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grant
190 Program.

191 **SECTION 5.** Section 37-159-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
192 reenacted as follows:

193 37-159-11. (1) There is established the Mississippi
194 Employer-Assisted Housing Teacher Program, which shall be a
195 special home loan program for eligible licensed teachers who
196 render service to the state in a geographical area of the state
197 where there exists a critical shortage of teachers, as designated
198 by the State Board of Education. The home loan program shall be
199 administered by the State Department of Education. The department
200 may contract with one or more public or private entities to
201 provide assistance in implementing and administering the program.
202 The State Board of Education shall adopt rules and regulations
203 regarding the implementation and administration of the program.



204 (2) Participation in the loan program shall be available to
205 any licensed teacher who renders service in a geographical area of
206 the state where there exists a critical shortage of teachers, as
207 designated by the State Board of Education. Any person who
208 receives a loan under the program shall be required to purchase a
209 house and reside in a county in which the school district for
210 which the teacher is rendering service, or any portion of the
211 school district, is located. The maximum amount of a loan that
212 may be made under the program to any person shall be Six Thousand
213 Dollars (\$6,000.00).

214 (3) Any loan made under the program to a person who actually
215 renders service as a teacher in a geographical area of the state
216 where there exists a critical shortage of teachers, as designated
217 by the State Board of Education, shall be converted to an
218 interest-free grant on the basis of one (1) year's service for
219 one-third (1/3) of the amount of the loan. Any person who does
220 not render three (3) years' service as a teacher in a geographical
221 area of the state where there exists a critical shortage of
222 teachers, as designated by the State Board of Education, shall be
223 liable to the State Department of Education for one-third (1/3) of
224 the amount of the loan for each year that he does not render such
225 service, plus interest accruing at the current Stafford Loan rate
226 at the time the person discontinues his service. If a claim for
227 repayment under this subsection is placed in the hands of an



228 attorney for collection, the obligor shall be liable for an
229 additional amount equal to a reasonable attorney's fee.

230 (4) All funds received by the State Department of Education
231 as repayment of loans by program participants shall be deposited
232 in the Mississippi Critical Teacher Shortage Fund.

233 **SECTION 6.** Section 37-159-13, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
234 reenacted as follows:

235 37-159-13. (1) There is established a pilot program to
236 provide for the construction of rental housing units for teachers
237 in the West Tallahatchie School District, which pilot program
238 shall be administered by the State Department of Education. The
239 department may contract with one or more public or private
240 entities to provide assistance in implementing and administering
241 the program. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules and
242 regulations regarding the implementation and administration of the
243 program.

244 (2) The West Tallahatchie School District shall receive
245 proposals from developers for the construction of the rental
246 housing units, and submit its recommendation to the State
247 Department of Education about which developer should construct the
248 units. The department shall make the final determination about
249 the developer that will construct the units.

250 (3) After selection of the developer, the department shall
251 loan the developer not more than Two Hundred Thousand Dollars
252 (\$200,000.00) for construction of the units. The interest rate on



253 the loan shall be equal to one percent (1%) below the discount
254 rate at the Federal Reserve Bank in the Federal Reserve district
255 in which the school district is located, and the loan shall be
256 repaid in not more than fifteen (15) years, as determined by the
257 department. All funds received by the department as repayment of
258 the principal and interest of the loan shall be deposited in the
259 Mississippi Critical Teacher Shortage Fund. If a claim against
260 the developer for repayment is placed in the hands of an attorney
261 for collection, the obligor shall be liable for an additional
262 amount equal to a reasonable attorney's fee.

263 (4) The developer shall operate the rental housing units.
264 For a period of ten (10) years or until such time as the loan to
265 the developer is repaid, whichever is longer, the priority for
266 residence in the units shall be given first to teachers employed
267 by the school district, then to other licensed school district
268 employees, and then to any other school district employees.

269 **SECTION 7.** Section 37-159-17, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
270 reenacted as follows:

271 37-159-17. There is established in the State Treasury a
272 special fund to be designated the "Mississippi Critical Teacher
273 Shortage Fund," into which shall be deposited those funds
274 appropriated by the Legislature, and any other funds that may be
275 made available, for the purpose of implementing the programs
276 established under Sections 37-159-5, 37-9-77, 37-3-91 and 37-159-9
277 through 37-159-13. Money in the fund at the end of a fiscal year



278 shall not lapse into the General Fund, and interest earned on any
279 amounts deposited into the fund shall be credited to the special
280 fund.

281 **SECTION 8.** Section 37-159-19, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
282 amended as follows:

283 37-159-19. Sections 37-159-1 through 37-159-17 shall stand
284 repealed on July 1, * * * 2027.

285 **SECTION 9.** Section 37-106-36, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
286 amended as follows:

287 37-106-36. (1) There is established the "William F. Winter
288 and Jack Reed, Sr., Teacher Loan Repayment Program."

289 (2) Subject to the availability of funds, an eligible
290 applicant for an initial award must have:

291 (a) Graduated from a baccalaureate degree-granting
292 institution of higher learning which is regionally accredited by
293 the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) or a
294 comparable accreditation body;

295 (b) Signed a contract as a full-time first-year teacher
296 in a public school district in Mississippi;

297 (c) Obtained a standard five-year license. Persons
298 with emergency licenses shall not be eligible applicants; and

299 (d) Outstanding qualifying undergraduate educational
300 loans, which may include the principal, interest and related
301 expenses such as the required interest premium on the unpaid



302 balances of government and commercial loans obtained by the
303 recipient for undergraduate educational expense.

304 (3) Persons who have received funds from other forgivable
305 loan programs established for teachers under Mississippi law, or
306 who are presently in default or delinquent on any federal, state,
307 local or commercial qualifying educational loan, shall not be
308 eligible for this program.

309 (4) Initial recipients shall be selected on a first-come,
310 first-served basis of all eligible applicants, which shall be
311 limited to only one hundred fifty (150) individuals receiving
312 scholarship funds subject to the availability of funds. In the
313 second and subsequent years of an applicant's continued
314 eligibility, priority consideration shall first be given to
315 renewal applicants. In any given year only one hundred fifty
316 (150) new applicants shall be eligible to receive funds under the
317 program. The State Financial Aid Board shall develop rules for
318 ensuring that expenses of the program in a fiscal year do not
319 exceed funding for the program in that fiscal year. For that
320 purpose, and any other provision of this section to the contrary
321 notwithstanding, the State Financial Aid Board may limit the
322 acceptance of applications and may limit the number of awards.

323 (5) Among first-time, first-year teacher recipients,
324 priority consideration shall be given to persons who are teaching
325 in a public school district designated as a geographical critical
326 teacher shortage area by the State Board of Education.



327 (6) Awards for recipients who have signed a contract to
328 teach in a public school district that is not designated as a
329 geographical critical teacher shortage area shall be as follows:

330 (a) One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500.00) for
331 the first year of teaching;

332 (b) Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) for
333 the second year of teaching; and

334 (c) Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$3,500.00) for
335 the third year of teaching.

336 (7) Awards for recipients who have signed a contract to
337 teach in a public school district that is designated as a
338 geographical critical teacher shortage area shall be as follows:

339 (a) Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00) for the first
340 year of teaching;

341 (b) Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) for the second
342 year of teaching, provided the recipient continues to teach in the
343 same public school district or another public school district
344 designated a geographical shortage area by the State Board of
345 Education; and

346 (c) Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000.00) for the third year
347 of teaching, provided the recipient continues to teach in the same
348 public school district or another public school district
349 designated a geographical shortage area by the State Board of
350 Education.



351 (8) A first-year recipient who moves to another public
352 school district shall be eligible to receive an award based on the
353 amount allowed under the program in the new district where the
354 teacher is employed.

355 (9) Awards shall be granted on a year-to-year basis, and
356 recipients shall have no obligation to seek a future award.

357 (10) Awards shall be paid annually, after the expiration of
358 the one-year teaching contract for which the award was granted, to
359 the recipient's lender or loan service provider, and shall be
360 applied to the outstanding balance. Monies paid on the
361 recipient's behalf toward qualifying undergraduate educational
362 loans prior to receiving payment of the award shall not be
363 eligible for repayment through the program.

364 (11) During the teaching year for which the award is
365 granted, a recipient must at all times keep the State Financial
366 Aid Board informed of any changes to the recipient's current
367 contact information and employment status.

368 (12) Recipients who fail to maintain a standard license or
369 fail to fulfill the one-year teaching contract on which the award
370 was based shall forfeit any right to the award.

371 (13) The State Financial Aid Board, in collaboration with
372 the State Board of Education, shall track recipients of an award
373 under this program through their fifth teaching year, unless the
374 recipient shall leave teaching in a public school district at an
375 earlier date. Data collected shall include recipients'



376 undergraduate institution, school district, subject area/grade
377 level in teaching and any other pertinent information necessary to
378 determine the efficacy of the program in retaining teachers in
379 their first three (3) years of teaching.

380 (14) The State Financial Aid Board shall promulgate
381 regulations necessary for the proper administration of this
382 section, including rules for ensuring that expenses of the program
383 in a fiscal year do not exceed funding for the program in that
384 fiscal year.

385 (15) There is established in the State Treasury a special
386 fund to be designated the "William F. Winter and Jack Reed, Sr.,
387 Loan Repayment Program Fund," into which shall be deposited those
388 funds appropriated by the Legislature, and any other funds that
389 may be made available, for the purpose of implementing the loan
390 repayment program established herein. Money in the fund at the
391 end of the fiscal year shall not lapse into the General Fund, and
392 interest earned on any amounts deposited into the fund shall be
393 credited to the special fund.

394 (16) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, * * *
395 2028.

396 **SECTION 10.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
397 and after July 1, 2024.

**Further, amend by striking the title in its entirety and
inserting in lieu thereof the following:**



1 AN ACT TO REENACT SECTIONS 37-159-1, 37-159-5, 37-159-7,
2 37-159-9, 37-159-11, 37-159-13 AND 37-159-17, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF
3 1972, WHICH CONSTITUTE THE MISSISSIPPI CRITICAL TEACHER SHORTAGE
4 ACT OF 1998 AND INCLUDE THE UNIVERSITY ASSISTED TEACHER
5 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION GRANT PROGRAM, THE MISSISSIPPI
6 EMPLOYER-ASSISTED HOUSING TEACHER PROGRAM, AND A PILOT PROGRAM TO
7 PROVIDE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF RENTAL HOUSING FOR TEACHERS IN THE
8 WEST TALLAHATCHIE SCHOOL DISTRICT; TO AMEND SECTION 37-159-19,
9 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO EXTEND THE DATE OF THE REPEALER ON
10 THE MISSISSIPPI CRITICAL TEACHER SHORTAGE ACT OF 1998; TO AMEND
11 SECTION 37-106-36, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REVISE THE WILLIAM
12 F. WINTER AND JACK REED, SR., TEACHER LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM; TO
13 PROVIDE THAT THE STATE FINANCIAL AID BOARD SHALL DEVELOP RULES FOR
14 ENSURING THAT EXPENSES OF THE PROGRAM IN A FISCAL YEAR DO NOT
15 EXCEED FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM IN THAT FISCAL YEAR; TO PROVIDE
16 THAT THE STATE FINANCIAL AID BOARD MAY LIMIT THE ACCEPTANCE OF
17 APPLICATIONS AND MAY LIMIT THE NUMBER OF AWARDS; TO EXTEND THE
18 DATE OF THE REPEALER ON THE TEACHER LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM; AND
19 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

