



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Representative Thomas A. Tangretti

**FROM:** Jeff Fox, Research Analyst  
Legislative Research Office (787-9516)  
G-09 Irvis Office Building  
JFox@pahouse.net

**DATE:** February 7, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Research memo providing information in support of your Math and Science  
Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program (HB 1506)

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Per your request, I have provided information for use in a possible floor debate regarding your math science teacher loan forgiveness program.

First, I have provided a copy of the research memo used in the development of House Bill 1506, as well as a copy of the co-sponsorship memo distributed prior to introduction of the bill. Next, I have attached a summary of the recent report, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*, by the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering and the Institute of Medicine, which were chartered by the Congress of the United States to provide advice to the government on science, engineering and medicine. Also, I have provided you with an article from Businessweek.online that succinctly explains the ramifications of a lack of math and science teachers on our nation's economy.

Finally, below you will find excerpts on the issue gleaned from various publications, as well as a Stateline.org article on the education initiatives and spending plan included in the President's recent State of the Union address.



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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Representative Thomas A. Tangretti

**FROM:** Jeff Fox, Research Analyst  
Legislative Research Office (787-9516)  
G-09 Irvis Office Building  
JFox@pahouse.net

**DATE:** March 18, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Research Memo on Math Science Teacher Loan Forgiveness

Per your request, I have researched the issue of loan forgiveness programs for math and science teachers. As directed, I began my research with House Bill 884 of the 2003-2004 Legislative Session and reviewed proposed and existing loan forgiveness programs for several occupations. I concluded my research with suggested changes to differentiate any new legislation from HB 884 and to strengthen the loan forgiveness program.

**House Bill 884 of the 2003-2004 Legislative Session**

House Bill 884 was introduced by Representative Saylor and provided for loan forgiveness, of up to \$3000 per year and \$12,000 total, for eligible math and science teachers. Eligible applicants were required to be:

- Certified by the Department of Education to teach either math or science
- In their first year of teaching either math or science
- Teaching in an eligible school district in Pennsylvania
- Owe money to an agency-guaranteed Stafford or Consolidation Loan Program
- A resident of the Commonwealth

This legislation unanimously passed the House on June 9, 2003 and was referred to the Senate Education Committee, where it died at the end of the legislative session.

### **Proposals to change and strengthen HB 884 of the 2003-2004 Legislative Session**

After reviewing HB 884 and other information, I suggest drafting legislation similar to House Bill 884 of the 2003-2004 legislative session with two additions:

1. Incrementally increase the loan forgiveness amount each of the four years- House Bill 884 allowed for loan forgiveness of up to \$3,000 per year and \$12,000 total per applicant. Other legislation proposing loan forgiveness programs utilized an incrementally increasing dollar amount. In the 2005-2006 Legislative Session, Representative Roebuck has introduced a bill which would establish an Urban Teach Loan Forgiveness Program. Following is the incremental increase used in this legislation:

*Qualified applicants may receive loan forgiveness awards as follows:*

- (1) *First academic year of full-time teaching in an amount up to \$2,000.*
- (2) *Second academic year of full-time teaching in an amount up to \$3,000.*
- (3) *Third academic year of full-time teaching in an amount up to \$4,000.*
- (4) *Fourth academic year of full-time teaching in an amount up to \$6,000.*

This incremental increase in HB 63 provides a growing incentive or investment over time for teachers to remain in Pennsylvania. I recommend replacing the \$3000 annual and \$12000 total loan forgiveness in HB 884, with incremental increases like those in HB 63 as follows:

*Qualified applicants may receive loan forgiveness awards as follows:*

- (1) *First academic year of full-time teaching in an amount up to \$1,000.*
- (2) *Second academic year of full-time teaching in an amount up to 2,000.*
- (3) *Third academic year of full-time teaching in an amount up to \$4,000.*
- (4) *Fourth academic year of full-time teaching in an amount up to \$8,000.*

By establishing incremental increases in the amount of the loan forgiveness, which will double each of the four years, we will be creating a program providing teachers more of a financial

incentive to remain teaching in Pennsylvania for four consecutive years than the original HB 884.

2. Loan forgiveness available only for Pennsylvania residents matriculating at Pennsylvania institutions of higher education– There are several benefits to making this program available only to students attending Pennsylvania higher education institutions. First, by providing this program only for students attending Pennsylvania colleges and universities, we will create a financial incentive for students to spend their educational dollars and accompanying living expenses in our state. Students staying in the state will help maintain enrollment levels at our schools, even if they decide to major in another field or chose to teach in another state upon graduation.

Secondly, funds used to forgive these loans will likely be generated by Pennsylvania taxpayers. The primary goal of the program is to encourage students to teach in Pennsylvania. By adding this new requirement, a new benefit of the program will be we will be spending these taxpayer dollars only at Pennsylvania institutions. This is different than most other programs, which allow Pennsylvania residents to attend out of state institutions and still receive loan forgiveness.

I hope this information proves useful. If you have any questions on this information, or if you wish to have legislation drafted, please do not hesitate to contact me.