1 State of Arkansas

2 95th General Assembly

A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2025   HOUSE BILL 1023

4

5 By: Representative A. Collins

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8 ## For An Act To Be Entitled

9   AN ACT TO AMEND THE STATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM;

10   TO AMEND THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR LOAN

11   FORGIVENESS UNDER THE STATE TEACHER EDUCATION

12   PROGRAM; TO AMEND THE LOAN REPAYMENT AMOUNTS UNDER

13   THE STATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER

14   PURPOSES.

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17 ## Subtitle

18   TO AMEND THE STATE TEACHER EDUCATION

19   PROGRAM; AND TO AMEND THE ELIGIBILITY

20   REQUIREMENTS FOR LOAN FORGIVENESS AND

21   THE LOAN REPAYMENT AMOUNTS UNDER THE

22   STATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM.

23

24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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26   SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1604(b), concerning the standards for

27 loan repayments under the State Teacher Education Program, is amended to read

28 as follows:

29   (b) The division shall adopt standards for awarding the loan

30 repayments to a public school teacher with an Arkansas teacher's license an

31 applicant who is eligible to participate in the program under § 6-81-1605

32 teaching in a:

33   (1) Subject area with a teacher shortage; or

34   (2) Geographic area with teacher shortage.

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36   SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1605 is amended to read as follows:

1   6-81-1605. Eligibility.

2   To be eligible for the State Teacher Education Program, an applicant

3 shall:

4   (1) Teach full-time ~~at~~:

5   (A) At a public school district in a subject area or

6 geographic area with a teacher shortage, as identified by the Division of

7 Higher Education in consultation with the Division of Elementary and

8 Secondary Education; or

9   (B) In a public early childhood education program that

10 serves children whose ages may range from birth through prekindergarten;

11   (2) ~~Hold~~ Either:

12   (A) Hold a valid Arkansas teacher's license; or

13   (B) Hold a birth through prekindergarten teaching

14 credential from the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education of

15 the Department of Human Services; and

16   (3)(A) Meet additional continuing eligibility criteria

17 established by the Division of Higher Education.

18   (B) An individual who has earned a teaching license upon

19 the successful completion of an alternative educator preparation program is

20 an eligible student under this section.

21

22   SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1606(a), concerning loan repayments

23 under the State Teacher Education Program, is amended to read as follows:

24   (a)(1) The State Teacher Education Program shall be used to provide a

25 loan repayment for federal student loans in the amount of ~~six thousand~~

26 ~~dollars ($6,000)~~ ten thousand dollars ($10,000) per year for a maximum of

27 ~~three (3)~~ five (5) years for ~~a licensed teacher who graduated from a teacher~~

28 ~~education program after April 2004 and teaches in a public school in this~~

29 ~~state or successfully completed an alternative educator preparation program~~

30 ~~after April 2004 and teaches in a public school in the State Teacher~~

31 ~~Education Program:~~

32   ~~(A) In a subject area designated by the Division of Higher~~

33 ~~Education in consultation with the Division of Elementary and Secondary~~

34 ~~Education as having a critical shortage of teachers; and~~

35   ~~(B) Located in a geographical area of the state designated~~

36 ~~by the Division of Higher Education in consultation with the Division of~~

1   ~~Elementary and Secondary Education as having a critical shortage of teachers~~

2   <u>an individual who is eligible to participate in the program under § 6-81-</u>

3   <u>1605</u>.

4   (2) A licensed teacher who is given intensive support status

5   under the Teacher Excellence and Support System, § 6-17-2801 et seq., shall

6   be ineligible for receipt of funds under the ~~State Teacher Education Program~~

7   <u>program</u> for the school year.

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