

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 583

To create a competitive grant program for States to enable the States to award salary bonuses to highly qualified elementary school or secondary school teachers who teach, or commit to teach, for at least 3 academic years in a school served by a rural local educational agency.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 14, 2007

Mr. SALAZAR introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To create a competitive grant program for States to enable the States to award salary bonuses to highly qualified elementary school or secondary school teachers who teach, or commit to teach, for at least 3 academic years in a school served by a rural local educational agency.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Rural Teacher Reten-  
5 tion Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1           (1) More than 8,000,000 children, representing  
2           21 percent of all public school children in the United  
3           States, attend public schools in rural areas.

4           (2) There are 24,123 public schools in rural  
5           areas of the United States, representing 31 percent  
6           of all public schools.

7           (3) More than 400,000 educators, or 31 percent  
8           of all public school teachers, teach in rural schools.

9           (4) Rural school teachers earn approximately  
10          14 percent less than their counterparts in other re-  
11          gions.

12          (5) Despite lower salaries, rural school teachers  
13          typically teach multiple subjects and perform their  
14          jobs with fewer resources than their counterparts in  
15          other regions.

16          (6) One of the most critical challenges facing  
17          rural school districts is in attracting and retaining  
18          qualified teachers.

19          (7) Rural school districts tend to have higher  
20          teacher turnover rates than school districts in other  
21          regions.

22          (8) High teacher turnover has a negative im-  
23          pact on student performance, school district per-  
24          formance, and the ability of teachers to become  
25          highly qualified.

1 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) CHILD WITH A DISABILITY.—The term  
4 “child with a disability” has the meaning given the  
5 term in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabil-  
6 ities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401).

7 (2) HIGHLY QUALIFIED.—Except as provided in  
8 paragraph (3), the term “highly qualified” when  
9 used with respect to a teacher, has the meaning  
10 given the term in section 9101 of the Elementary  
11 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.  
12 7801).

13 (3) HIGHLY QUALIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATION  
14 TEACHER.—The term “highly qualified” when used  
15 with respect to a special education teacher, has the  
16 meaning given the term in section 602 of the Indi-  
17 viduals with Disabilities Education Act.

18 (4) LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT.—The term  
19 “limited English proficient” has the meaning given  
20 the term in section 9101 of the Elementary and Sec-  
21 ondary Education Act of 1965.

22 (5) LOW-INCOME STUDENT.—The term “low-in-  
23 come student” means a child eligible to be counted  
24 under section 1124(c)(1)(A) of the Elementary and  
25 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.  
26 6333(c)(1)(A)).

(6) MIGRATORY CHILD.—The term “migratory child” has the meaning given the term in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6399).

(7) RURAL LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the term “rural local educational agency” means a local educational agency that—

(i)(I) is described in section 6211(b), 6221(b)(1), or 9101(26)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7345(b), 7351(b)(1), 7801(26)(C)); or

(II) serves a high number or percentage of children who are Native Hawaiian as defined in section 7207(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517(1)); and

(ii) has experienced a teacher turnover rate of not less than 10 percent of all the teachers teaching in the schools served by the local educational agency in any of the 3 academic years preceding the date of enactment of this Act.

1 (B) COUNTY RULE.—If a local educational  
2 agency serves 2 or more counties in their en-  
3 tirety, then each county shall be treated as if  
4 such county were a separate local educational  
5 agency for purposes of determinations under  
6 subparagraph (A).

7 (8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
8 the Secretary of Education.

9 **SEC. 4. PILOT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**

10 (a) GRANTS.—From amounts appropriated under  
11 section 6 for each fiscal year, the Secretary shall carry  
12 out a 5-year pilot program under which the Secretary  
13 awards grants, on a competitive basis, to not more than  
14 10 States to enable the States to award salary bonuses  
15 to highly qualified teachers or highly qualified special edu-  
16 cation teachers who teach, or commit to teach, for at least  
17 3 academic years, in an elementary school or secondary  
18 school served by the same rural local educational agency.

19 (b) AWARD BASIS.—The Secretary shall award  
20 grants under this section on the basis of the needs of rural  
21 local educational agencies within a State for recruiting  
22 and retaining highly qualified teachers or highly qualified  
23 special education teachers.

24 (c) CONSIDERATION OF NEEDS.—In determining the  
25 needs of rural local educational agencies for recruiting and

1 retaining highly qualified teachers and highly qualified  
2 special education teachers under subsection (b), the Sec-  
3 retary shall consider 1 or more of the following:

4 (1) The eligibility of a rural local educational  
5 agency for assistance under part B of title VI of the  
6 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965  
7 (20 U.S.C. 7341 et seq.).

8 (2) The impact on a rural local educational  
9 agency of low-income students who are served by the  
10 rural local educational agency.

11 (3) The impact on a rural local educational  
12 agency of limited English proficient students who  
13 are served by the rural local educational agency.

14 (4) The impact on a rural local educational  
15 agency of migrant students who are served by the  
16 rural local educational agency.

17 (5) The number or percentage of rural local  
18 educational agencies described in section  
19 9101(26)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-  
20 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801(26)(C)).

21 (6) The impact on a rural local educational  
22 agency of children with a disability who are served  
23 by the rural local educational agency.

24 (7) The long-term plans of a State to improve  
25 the recruitment and retention of highly qualified

1 teachers and highly qualified special education  
2 teachers in rural local educational agencies within  
3 the State.

4 (d) APPLICATION.—A State that desires to receive a  
5 grant under this section shall submit an application to the  
6 Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied  
7 by such information as the Secretary may require. The  
8 application shall contain a plan for the proposed distribu-  
9 tion and use of the grant funds among rural local edu-  
10 cational agencies within the State.

11 (e) USE OF FUNDS.—Grant funds under this section  
12 shall be used to provide salary bonuses for highly qualified  
13 teachers or highly qualified special education teachers who  
14 teach, or commit to teach, for at least 3 academic years,  
15 in an elementary school or secondary school served by the  
16 same rural local educational agency.

17 **SEC. 5. STUDY AND REPORTS.**

18 (a) STUDY.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry  
20 out a study of each project that is funded under this  
21 Act. The study shall track and assess the implemen-  
22 tation and effectiveness of each project.

23 (2) RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—From the  
24 amount appropriated under section 6 for fiscal year  
25 2008, the Secretary shall reserve not more than 1

1 percent or \$500,000, whichever is greater, to carry  
2 out the study described in paragraph (1).

3 (b) REPORTS.—

4 (1) ANNUAL REPORTS FROM STATES.—Each  
5 State receiving a grant under this Act shall submit  
6 an annual report to the Secretary regarding each  
7 project within the State that is funded under this  
8 Act. The report shall contain such information as  
9 the Secretary determines necessary to evaluate the  
10 project.

11 (2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall  
13 submit a report on the study described in sub-  
14 section (a)(1) to the Committee on Health,  
15 Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate  
16 and to the Committee on Education and Labor  
17 of the House of Representatives not later than  
18 September 30, 2012.

19 (B) CONTENTS.—The report shall in-  
20 clude—

21 (i) the number of rural local edu-  
22 cational agencies assisted under this Act;

23 (ii) the characteristics of such rural  
24 local educational agencies with respect to



1 the considerations of needs described in  
2 section 4(c);

3 (iii) the number and demographic  
4 characteristics of teachers receiving bo-  
5 nuses under this Act;

6 (iv) the impact of the bonuses pro-  
7 vided under this Act on the ability of rural  
8 local educational agencies assisted under  
9 this Act to recruit and retain highly quali-  
10 fied teachers and highly qualified special  
11 education teachers; and

12 (v) such other information and anal-  
13 ysis as the Secretary determines necessary  
14 to evaluate the projects.

15 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATION.**

16 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out  
17 this Act \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2008 and such sums  
18 as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2009  
19 through 2012.

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