



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

No. 1601

H.P. 1160

House of Representatives, April 18, 2019

An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Educators for Maine Program

Submitted by the Finance Authority of Maine pursuant to Joint Rule 204.
Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative PIERCE of Falmouth.
Cosponsored by Senator MILLETT of Cumberland and
Representatives: DAUGHTRY of Brunswick, FECTEAU of Biddeford, MOONEN of
Portland.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §12501-A, sub-§10**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 427, §2, is
3 amended to read:

4 **10. Graduating high school senior.** "Graduating high school senior" means a
5 student who is a resident of the State, who graduates from a secondary school ~~approved~~
6 ~~pursuant to section 2901 or completes a home instruction program as described in section~~
7 5001-A, subsection 3, paragraph A, subparagraph (4) and who is entering that student's
8 first year in an institution of higher education at the beginning of the next academic year.
9 ~~An academic year for graduating high school seniors is considered to be from September~~
10 ~~to June.~~

11 **Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §12501-A, sub-§12**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 7, §1, is
12 further amended to read:

13 **12. Return service.** "Return service" means service in a public elementary or
14 secondary school, publicly supported secondary school, special education facility as
15 defined in section 7001, subsection 6 or private school in this State approved for tuition
16 purposes for a full school year as a certified teacher or a speech pathologist, service as a
17 Jobs for Maine's Graduates specialist with similar teacher certification or service for a
18 12-month period in a child care facility by an individual who has attained child care
19 provider qualifications.

20 **Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §12501-A, sub-§14-A** is enacted to read:

21 **14-A. Underserved geographic areas.** "Underserved geographic areas" means
22 those geographic areas of the State where there is an insufficient supply of teachers or
23 speech pathologists as determined by the chief executive officer in consultation with the
24 commissioner.

25 **Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §12502**, as amended by PL 2003, c. 427, §3, is further
26 amended by adding at the end a new paragraph to read:

27 Under the program, the authority may annually award a certain number of loan
28 repayments to selected educators in underserved geographic areas as funds permit. A
29 selected loan repayment recipient must enter into a loan repayment agreement with the
30 authority and may receive payment from the authority on the recipient's outstanding
31 student debt for each year of service as long as the recipient teaches in an underserved
32 geographic area.

33 **Sec. 5. 20-A MRSA §12503, last ¶**, as amended by PL 1999, c. 441, §7, is
34 repealed.

35 **Sec. 6. 20-A MRSA §12504, last ¶**, as amended by PL 2003, c. 427, §5, is
36 further amended to read:

37 Loans of up to \$2,000 per academic year or \$8,000 total in an amount to be
38 determined annually by the authority based on available funds, but in no event less than

1 ~~Undergraduate students and \$2,000 per academic~~
2 ~~year for eligible students pursuing postbaccalaureate certification, may be made to~~
3 ~~students pursuing postbaccalaureate certification. Loans of up to \$3,000 per academic~~
4 ~~year or \$12,000 total may be made to eligible undergraduate students. Selected full-time~~
5 ~~undergraduate students may receive loans for a period not to exceed 8 semesters at the~~
6 ~~institution they attend. Selected full-time and part-time students pursuing~~
7 ~~postbaccalaureate certifications may receive loans for a period not to exceed 4 semesters~~
8 ~~or the equivalent thereof at the institution they attend. An individual who has received an~~
9 ~~Educators for Maine loan as an undergraduate may also receive a loan for students~~
10 ~~pursuing postbaccalaureate certification. In no event may an individual receive more~~
11 ~~than \$20,000 in total Educators for Maine loans. Loans are for one academic year and are~~
12 ~~renewable if the recipient maintains a grade point average of at least 2.5 based on a 4.0~~
13 ~~grade point system or the equivalent and submits a complete renewal application by the~~
14 ~~deadline annually.~~

15 **Sec. 7. 20-A MRSA §12505, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2003, c. 427, §6, is
16 further amended to read:

17 **1. Eligibility for loans for undergraduate education.** An Educators for Maine
18 loan recipient must be an undergraduate at an institution of higher education. ~~Preference~~
19 ~~must be given to students enrolled in a program that has been determined to be an~~
20 ~~underserved subject area.~~

21 **Sec. 8. 20-A MRSA §12507, first ¶**, as amended by PL 2003, c. 427, §10, is
22 further amended to read:

23 Each student who receives a loan may cancel the total amount of the loan by
24 completing one year of return service in ~~the a public schools school, publicly supported~~
25 ~~secondary school, special education facility as defined in section 7001, subsection 6 or~~
26 ~~private schools school~~ approved for tuition purposes in the State for each year the
27 individual receives a loan. An individual who received that individual's first program
28 loan after January 1, 2000 may also cancel the total amount of the loan by completing one
29 year of return service by working in a child care facility. The return service requirement
30 is one year for every 2 years or less that the individual receives a loan if return service is
31 performed in an underserved subject area or an underserved geographic area. Return
32 service for this purpose must be performed within ~~5~~ 10 years of graduation from the
33 institution of higher education. If the chief executive officer grants a deferment, the time
34 period for performance of return service may be extended for the same period as the
35 deferment. Return service may not be credited for the same semester for which an
36 individual receives a loan pursuant to this chapter. Pro rata loan forgiveness may be
37 granted for part-time return service as determined by rule of the authority. Failure to
38 fulfill the return service option necessitates repayment to the authority as follows.

39 SUMMARY

40 This bill amends the laws governing the Educators for Maine Program by expanding
41 certain definitions to include home-schooled students and educator service at publicly
42 supported secondary schools and special education facilities; adding service in

1 underserved geographic areas as an eligibility criterion; adding a loan repayment
2 provision to the program; removing the provision whereby the Governor announces
3 selected recipients annually; authorizing the Finance Authority of Maine to increase
4 maximum loan amounts based on available funding; establishing limits on the duration a
5 recipient may benefit under the program; removing the preference for loans to
6 undergraduate students enrolled in a course of study related to underserved subject areas;
7 and increasing from 5 to 10 years the amount of time a recipient has to complete the
8 return service requirement.