Representative Lightbody
Cosponsors: Representatives Miranda, Sobecki, Lepore-Hagan, Crossman, Blair, Smith, K., Miller, A., Liston, Weinstein

A BILL

To enact section 3319.58 of the Revised Code to establish a loan repayment program for eligible teachers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 3319.58 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows:

Sec. 3319.58. (A) As used in this section:

(1) "Eligible teacher" means an individual who satisfies all of the following conditions:

(a) The individual is an Ohio resident.

(b) The individual holds a valid educator license issued under section 3319.22 of the Revised Code to provide instruction in grades seven through twelve.

(c) The individual is employed full-time for the first time as a classroom teacher.

(d) The individual received a bachelor's degree awarded by any public or private institution of higher education in this
As Introduced

state.

(e) The individual has outstanding student loans for the degree described in division (A)(1)(d) of this section.

(f) The individual has made timely payments in accordance with the terms of the individual's repayment schedule for the outstanding student loans described in division (A)(1)(e) of this section.

(2) "Qualifying school" means a school building operated by a school district, a community school established under Chapter 3314., a STEM school established under Chapter 3326., or a college-preparatory boarding school established under Chapter 3328. of the Revised Code to which the department of education and the chancellor of higher education jointly determine that both of the following applies:

(a) The school building has persistently low performance ratings on its state report card under section 3302.03 or 3314.017 of the Revised Code.

(b) The school building has difficulty attracting and retaining classroom teachers who provide instruction in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics and hold a valid educator license issued under section 3319.22 of the Revised Code to provide instruction in grades seven through twelve.

(B) The department of education and the chancellor of higher education jointly shall establish and administer a teacher loan repayment program. Under the program, the department shall pay the amount specified in division (C) of this section to repay outstanding student loans described in division (A)(1)(e) of this section on behalf of the eligible teacher, if the teacher applies to receive an award under the
program upon being employed by a qualifying school and subsequently is employed by that school in a position providing instruction for five consecutive school years in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics to students enrolled in any of grades seven through twelve. An eligible teacher shall receive only one award under the program. The department shall make a payment directly to the eligible teacher's lender.

(C) The amount for each award under the program shall be the lesser of forty thousand dollars or the total amount of the outstanding student loans described in division (A)(1)(e) of the section for an eligible teacher who meets the requirement prescribed in division (B) of this section.

(D) The department and the chancellor jointly shall adopt rules to administer the program.

(E) The teacher loan repayment fund is hereby created in the state treasury, to consist of such amounts designated for the purposes of the fund by the general assembly. The fund shall be used to make awards under the program established under this section.

(F) The program established under this section shall cease to accept new applications under division (B) of this section on the date that is five calendar years after the effective date of this section. The program also shall cease to operate on the date that is ten calendar years after the effective date of this section.

Section 2. On July 1, 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter, the Director of Budget and Management shall transfer $25,000,000 cash from the General Revenue Fund to the Teacher Loan Repayment Program Fund (Fund 5W00) created in section
3319.58 of the Revised Code.