H-1227.1

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**HOUSE BILL 1643**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Ortiz-Self, Senn, Lovick, Appleton, Goodman, Bergquist, Hudgins, McBride, Frame, Doglio, Stanford, Pollet, Slatter, and Tarleton

AN ACT Relating to creating a loan forgiveness program for teachers in high-need schools; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Teachers in Washington are currently leaving the teaching profession at higher rates than have been seen in Washington in the past decade, and at rates that are higher than the national average. Unless additional incentives are provided, the attrition rates for teachers will continue, especially in hard to fill subject areas and locations; and

(b) The federal government provides loan forgiveness for teachers teaching in Title I schools. However, there are teachers who do not qualify for the federal program.

(2) In order to attract and retain teachers in high-need schools, the legislature intends to pay off the outstanding federal loan balances of teachers who have taught full-time for five consecutive years in specific subject matter shortage areas, such as English language learner and special education programs, and in specific geographic areas, such as rural and remote areas. This high-need teacher loan forgiveness program is intended to increase the number of individuals recruited to high-need schools and subject areas within targeted geographic regions in Washington; and to decrease the number of teachers leaving these high-need areas. Specifically, support in the form of loan forgiveness is aimed at individuals who are unsure about their ability to afford to become a teacher, and individuals who come from traditionally underrepresented groups.

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