

Please note the new legislation proposed by Congressman Joe Wilson (R-SC).

Rep. Wilson Introduces Legislation to Add SLP's to Teacher Loan Forgiveness Law

Congressman Joe Wilson (R-SC) recently introduced H.R. 670, the "Teacher Recruitment and Retention Act of 2005." This bill amends the Teacher-Taxpayer Protection Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-409) and the Higher Education Act of 1965 to treat school-based speech-language pathologists as special education teachers for purposes of specified student loan forgiveness. The new legislation, if passed by Congress, accomplished two things: 1) it permanently extends this program benefiting teachers of math, science and special education, and; 2) treats school-based speech-language pathologists as teachers of special education for the purpose of loan forgiveness only. In effect, school-based SLPs who have worked in high-poverty schools for five consecutive years could receive up to \$17,500 of their student loans eliminated if they borrowed Federal Stafford or Direct Loans since 1998, if this legislation is passed by Congress.

The Teacher-Taxpayer Protection Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-409) provides for limited loan forgiveness to eligible teachers of math, science, or special education who are new borrowers on or after October 1, 1998, and before October 1, 2005. This law authorizes up to \$17,500 in loan forgiveness for new Federal Stafford Loan borrowers under the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program and Federal Direct Loan Program who meet certain criteria.

School-based speech-language pathologists are already eligible for limited loan "cancellation" if they received a Federal Perkins Student Loan through their university. Under that program school-based SLPs are considered "Teaching in Special Education". For more information about the Perkins Student Loan cancellation program go to: <http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/cancelperk.jsp?tab=repaying>

We need your help to gain co-sponsors for this legislation to help make it law. You can do this easily by going to ASHA's Take Action Web site at <http://takeaction.asha.org>. From there you can send e-mails to your U.S. Representative asking for their support of H.R. 670. If your legislators have already signed on as co-sponsors, you'll get a default "thank you" letter to send to them! And after you have sent an e-mail to your Representative, please encourage other colleagues to do the same.

Dr. Ted Gray
Kansas Recruitment & Retention
Cell: 620/724-3207
Phone: 918/786-7512
DrTedGray@aol.com