

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Rep. David Price (D-NC) today introduced a bill to address one of the biggest challenges facing school districts throughout the country – the retention of qualified public school teachers. Today's move complements Price's ongoing efforts to expand teacher recruitment efforts at the national level.

Approximately one-third of teachers leave the profession within five years of being hired, according to the non-partisan Congressional Research Service (CRS). In some schools, the five-year attrition rate reaches 50 percent. This comes at a time when schools are hard-pressed to recruit enough teachers to fill the demand of the coming years. The National Education Association recently released an assessment revealing that American schools would need to hire an additional 2 million teachers over the next decade to keep pace with student growth.

Price's bill, the [Keep Teachers Teaching Act](#), would help schools cope with these pressures by providing federal grants directly to states or school districts to develop innovative teacher retention programs. The Department of Education would identify the most promising teacher retention approaches, drawing from fully-operational programs as well as those in the pilot test phase, and share information about the success of the various approaches to states and school districts around the country.

"There can't be a top-down, one-size-fits-all approach to solving our teacher retention crisis," Price said. "Some of the best policy ideas generate at the state and local level. My legislation seeks to identify and support those programs that produce results and to encourage other states to draw on the experience of their counterparts and work toward their own solutions."

Price spotlighted the [Kenan Fellows Program at North Carolina State University](#) as an example of a promising state-wide effort. Kenan Fellows are public school teachers who partner with scientists and university faculty for two years to develop innovative math, science and technology curricula for use in classrooms all across North Carolina.

"We've got to encourage teachers to stay in the classroom," Price said. "Whether it's supporting their professional development, providing them with the tools to perform their work, or contributing to a more positive working environment, the states and local districts have the awareness to come up with solutions. And at the federal level, we should help spark the innovation."

Price has been a leader in Congress on legislation to address the impending teacher shortage. He has been working for years to build on North Carolina's success at recruiting qualified teachers through the Teaching Fellows program by proposing legislation to expand access to similar programs throughout the country. The House recently approved legislation that would provide incentives for students to become math and science teachers in the public schools while offering professional development opportunities through the National Science Foundation and the Department of Education. (Read more about 10,000 Teachers, 10,000 Minds Act).

Price has proposed his new teacher retention proposal for consideration during the upcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as No Child Left Behind). Last month, as the House Education and Labor Committee was preparing to consider the No Child Left Behind Act, [Price testified before the committee](#) on his ideas for teacher recruitment and retention. Read his testimony [here](#).

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