

**Washington, D.C.** - Congressman David Price (NC-04) today re-introduced his "Teaching Fellows Act" in the House of Representatives. The bill would expand a successful North Carolina teacher recruitment and retention program to the national level.

"The impending teacher shortage is the most critical education issue we will face in the next decade," said Price. "We can reform the education system and talk about standards and accountability all day long, but our efforts won't amount to anything without a qualified teaching force to fill our classrooms. This initiative has been tried and proven in North Carolina, and I am confident Congress can help replicate its success forty-nine times over by passing my bill this year."

Congress previously incorporated major provisions of Price's legislation into the Ready to Teach Act, which sought to strengthen teacher training programs in order to meet the demands of No Child Left Behind. As the first in a series of bills to reauthorize the broader Higher Education Act, the Ready to Teach Act passed the House in 2003 but was not signed into law.

This year, both the House and Senate are expected to take up the Higher Education Act, and Price will push to ensure that the Teaching Fellows components are included in the final package.

Specifically, Price's Teaching Fellows Act would do the following:

- Support state scholarship programs for high school seniors and/or college sophomores who want to become teachers

- Provide fellowships to enable teacher assistants and community college students to earn a four-year degree or teaching certificate

- Offer these student teachers and new teachers access to mentors and extra-curricular programs designed to hone their teaching skills

-Require scholarship and fellowship recipients to teach in a public school following graduation

"This program does not simply throw money at individual students," Price added. "It promotes esprit de corps and collaborative learning, strengthens professional identity, and provides a support system as students first enter the classroom as teachers. It makes sense to build on this initiative's proven track record and begin the intensive national recruitment effort that is essential to strengthening our public education system."