

Washington, D.C. - David Price Reads to Schoolchildren

US Rep David Price (NC-04) has reintroduced his "Teaching Fellows Act," which would expand a 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've talked a lot about education reform here in Congress. But education reform won't work without quality teachers in our classroom. This legislation will help us attract the best and the brightest college students to the teaching profession."

During the last session of Congress, the major provisions of Price's Teaching Fellows Act were incorporated into legislation, called 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 Congress failed to agree on any additional bills, and it 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.

The Teaching Fellows Act is modeled on a North Carolina program that is successfully recruiting and retaining top-notch teachers. Specifically, it would:

-- 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 their four-year teaching certificates

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

-- In exchange, scholarship and fellowship recipients would be required to teach in a public school following graduation.

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