



Teacher Loan Program Held By Senate Committee

Feb 12, 2008 by Eric Ray

(KCPW News) The Senate Education Standing Committee yesterday held a bill aimed to recruit more public school teachers to Utah by providing a \$15,000 loan toward the purchase of a home. Of the six Senators present at the meeting, three said they would vote against the measure.

"In today's housing prices, I think \$15,000 is merely tokenism," says Senator Howard Stephenson, a Republican from Draper. "I just have a problem with doing this in lieu of higher teacher pay. Our real crisis in a statewide teacher shortage is overall compensation."

Senators Lyle Hillyard and Margaret Dayton joined Stephenson in voicing their opposition to the bill. Under the bill, teachers receiving their license in the last five years would be eligible for the loan. Teachers would make interest only payments on the loan. After five years, the state would forgive \$5,000 of the loan if the teacher is still working in a Utah classroom. The remaining \$10,000 would be forgiven if the teacher reaches the 10 year mark. The measure has already passed the House of Representatives. Representative Lynn Hemingway of Salt Lake County, sponsor of the bill, says he hopes to get the measure back on the committee's agenda.



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