HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 1351 FILED ON: 1/20/2011

HOUSE . . . . . No. 1832

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

David M. Torrisi and James B. Eldridge

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying:

An Act establishing an education loan repayment program for social workers in areas of need.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
David M. Torrisi	*14th Essex*
William Smitty Pignatelli	*4th Berkshire*
Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.	*34th Middlesex*
Linda Dorcena Forry	*12th Suffolk*
Martin J. Walsh	*13th Suffolk*
Karen E. Spilka	☐ *[District]* ☐
Jay R. Kaufman	*15th Middlesex*
Colleen M. Garry	*36th Middlesex*
Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.	*26th Middlesex*
Kay Khan	*11th Middlesex*
Paul J. Donato	*35th Middlesex*
Antonio F. D. Cabral	*13th Bristol*
Sean Garballey	*23rd Middlesex*
James J. Dwyer	*30th Middlesex*
Theodore C. Speliotis	*13th Essex*
William N. Brownsberger	

	[District]
Michael J. Rodrigues	*[District]*
Alice K. Wolf	*25th Middlesex*
Katherine M. Clark	*Middlesex and Essex*
Aaron Michlewitz	*3rd Suffolk*
Jason M. Lewis	*31st Middlesex*
Sonia Chang-Diaz	*[District]*
Sal N. DiDomenico	*Middlesex, Suffolk, and Essex*
James J. O'Day	*14th Worcester*
Denise Provost	*27th Middlesex*
Ruth B. Balser	*12th Middlesex*
Frank I. Smizik	*15th Norfolk*

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By Representative Torrisi of North Andover and Senator Eldridge, a joint petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1832) of David M. Torrisi and others for an appropriation of a certain sum of money to provide for the establishment of an education loan repayment program for social workers. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

An Act establishing an education loan repayment program for social workers in areas of need.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. To provide for certain unanticipated obligations of the commonwealth, to provide

for an alteration of purpose for current appropriations, and to meet certain requirements of law, the sum set forth in this section is hereby appropriated from the General Fund unless specifically designated otherwise in this section, for the several purposes and subject to the conditions specified in this section, and subject to the laws regulating the disbursement of public funds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. This sum shall be in addition to any amounts previously appropriated and made available for the purposes of this item.

XXXX – XXXX For the Licensed Certified Social Worker Student Education Loan Repayment

Pilot Program Trust Fund established in section 2 of this act ……. $1,200,000

SECTION 2. (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law to the contrary, there shall be a licensed certified social worker student education loan repayment pilot program, hereinafter referred to as the pilot program, for the purpose of increasing and retaining access to child welfare services and social services in the commonwealth. The pilot program shall provide financial assistance to eligible program participants to assist them in repaying student education loans, as defined in this section; provided, that the pilot program shall be limited to a total of 100 licensed certified social workers.

The pilot program shall be administered by the board of higher education. The board, in collaboration with the executive office of health and human services, shall promulgate

22 guidelines governing the pilot program. The guidelines shall include, but need not be limited to,
23 the following provisions: (1) eligibility shall be limited to persons with incomes that do not
24 exceed 500% of the federal poverty level; (2) eligibility shall be limited to persons entering the
25 field of social work after July 1, 2011; (3) eligibility shall be limited to social workers who are
26 licensed certified social workers as defined in section 130 of chapter 112 of the General Laws
27 and who are employed in child welfare, or in a geographic or programmatic setting defined as
28 high need under the guidelines governing the pilot program; (4) the commonwealth shall repay a
29 student education loan at a rate not to exceed $250 per month for a period not to exceed 48
30 months; (5) payments by the commonwealth shall be made directly to the lender on behalf of a
31 pilot program participant, and shall cover only loan payments owed by the participant in the
32 months during which the participant works in the commonwealth as a licensed certified social
33 worker in child welfare, or in a geographic or programmatic setting defined as high need under
34 pilot program guidelines; (6) procedures for selecting 100 pilot program participants among
35 eligible applicants; and (7) measures to deal with situations in which a pilot program participant
36 ceases to comply with program requirements.

37 For the purposes of this section, the term student education loan shall mean any
38 indebtedness, including interest on such indebtedness, incurred to pay tuition, fees or other direct
39 expenses incurred in connection with the pursuit of an undergraduate or graduate degree by an
40 applicant, but shall not include loans made by any person related to the applicant, or loans paid
41 by credit card.

42 (b) There is hereby established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate
43 fund to be known as the Licensed Certified Social Worker Student Education Loan Repayment
44 Pilot Program Trust Fund, hereinafter referred to as the Licensed Certified Social Worker
45 Education Loan Repayment Fund, to which shall be credited any appropriations or other monies
46 authorized by the general court and designated to be credited thereto. The board of higher
47 education shall hold the Licensed Certified Social Worker Education Loan Repayment Fund in
48 an account separate from other funds or accounts. Amounts credited to the Licensed Certified
49 Social Worker Education Loan Repayment Fund shall be used, without further appropriation, by
50 the commissioner of higher education or his designee, to carry out the licensed certified social
51 worker student education loan repayment pilot program established in this section.

52 (c) The licensed certified social worker student education loan repayment pilot program
53 shall expire once the final payment is made under this section by the board of higher education
54 on behalf of all pilot program participants. The board of higher education shall evaluate the
55 effectiveness of the pilot program and its benefits and costs to the commonwealth and shall
56 submit a report, together with its recommendations on whether a permanent program should be
57 established and if so how such program should be structured, to the general court by filing the
58 report with the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on
59 higher education, not less than one year prior to the expiration of the pilot program.