



Action Alert

ISSUE: Assembly Bill 211 (Chiaravallotti and Zwicker) establishes a loan redemption program for qualified STEM teachers in public schools, while failing to include nonpublic school teachers in any opportunity for the reimbursement. The Senate version of the bill has moved into the full Senate, and the prime sponsor, Senator Ruiz (D-29) has not yet agreed to amend the bill.

OUR POSITION: The New Jersey Catholic Conference and the New Jersey Network of Catholic School Families support fairness in grant programs for qualified STEM teachers. In the past, other grant programs for specific content areas have included nonpublic school teachers. If the goal of the bill is to provide excellent STEM education in all New Jersey schools, then nonpublic school teachers should be included.

ACTION: Contact the offices of Assemblymen Chiaravallotti and Zwicker and tell them how important STEM teaching is to nonpublic schools. Explain to them that program participants in the bill should include school districts AND nonpublic schools. Nonpublic school teachers should not be considered as second-class citizens by their lack of eligibility for this grant program.

Because the bill will probably not be scheduled until after the election, there is ample time to continue to call, email, or meet personally with the two sponsors to encourage them to include nonpublic school teachers in their bill. The goal of the program is a worthy one, and there should be no discrimination in eligibility between public and nonpublic school teachers.

The contact information for both legislators is listed below. The bill is currently residing in the Assembly Science, Innovation, and Technology Committee, of which Assemblyman Zwicker is the Chair. The other Committee members are also listed, and you should contact their offices to ask them to vote favorably on an amendment that would include nonpublic school teachers in the grant.

Bill Sponsors

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