S. 1240

To support the establishment and operation of Teachers Professional Development Institutes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 21 (legislative day, JUNE 16), 2011

Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To support the establishment and operation of Teachers Professional Development Institutes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-

tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN-

STITUTES.

(a) In General.—Part A of title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6601 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the fol-

lowing:
“Subpart 6—Teachers Professional Development Institutes

“SEC. 2161. SHORT TITLE.

“This subpart may be cited as the ‘Teachers Professional Development Institutes Act’.

“SEC. 2162. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

“(1) Teaching is central to the educational process and the ongoing professional development of teachers in the subjects they teach is essential for improved student learning.

“(2) Attaining the goal of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–110)—having a classroom teacher who is highly effective in every academic subject the teacher teaches—will require innovative approaches to improve the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom.

“(3) The Teachers Institute Model focuses on the continuing academic preparation of schoolteachers and the application of what the teachers study to their classrooms and potentially to the classrooms of other teachers.

“(4) The Teachers Institute Model was developed initially by the Yale-New Haven Teachers In-
stitute and has successfully operated in New Haven, Connecticut, for more than 30 years.

“(5) The Teachers Institute Model has also been successfully implemented in cities larger than New Haven.

“(6) In the spring of 2009, a report entitled ‘An Evaluation of Teachers Institute Experiences’ concluded that—

“(A) Teachers Institutes enhance precisely those teacher qualities known to improve student achievement;

“(B) Teachers Institutes exemplify the crucial characteristics of high-quality teacher professional development; and

“(C) Teachers Institute participation is strongly related to teacher retention in high-poverty schools.

“(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this subpart is to provide Federal assistance to support the establishment and operation of Teachers Institutes for local educational agencies that serve significant low-income student populations in States throughout the Nation, in order to—

“(1) improve student learning; and

“(2) enhance the quality and effectiveness of teaching and strengthen the subject matter mastery
and the pedagogical skills of current teachers through continuing teacher preparation.

“SEC. 2163. DEFINITIONS.

“In this subpart:

“(1) SIGNIFICANT LOW-INCOME STUDENT POPULATION.—The term ‘significant low-income student population’ means a student population of which not less than 40 percent of the students included are eligible for free or reduced price lunches under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act.

“(2) TEACHERS INSTITUTE.—The term ‘Teachers Institute’ means a partnership or joint venture—

“(A) between or among—

“(i) 1 or more institutions of higher education; and

“(ii) 1 or more local educational agencies that serve 1 or more schools with significant low-income student populations; and

“(B) that improves the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom, and the quality of teaching and learning, through collaborative seminars designed to enhance both the subject matter and the pedagogical resources of the seminar participants.
“SEC. 2164. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to award grants under this subpart in order to encourage the establishment and operation of Teachers Institutes.

“(b) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may reserve not more than 50 percent of the funds appropriated to carry out this subpart to provide technical assistance to facilitate the establishment and operation of Teachers Institutes. The Secretary may contract with the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute to provide all or part of the technical assistance under this subsection.

“(c) SELECTION CRITERIA.—In selecting Teachers Institutes to support through grants under this subpart, the Secretary shall consider—

“(1) the extent to which a proposed Teachers Institute will serve schools that have significant low-income student populations;

“(2) the extent to which a proposed Teachers Institute will follow the understandings and necessary procedures described in section 2166;

“(3) the extent to which each local educational agency participating in the Teachers Institute has a high percentage of teachers who are unprepared or underprepared to teach the core academic subjects the teachers are assigned to teach; and
“(4) the extent to which a proposed Teachers Institute will receive a level of support from the community and other sources that will ensure the requisite long-term commitment for the success of a Teachers Institute.

“(d) Consultation.—

“(1) In general.—In evaluating applications using the criteria under subsection (c), the Secretary may request the advice and assistance of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute or other Teachers Institutes.

“(2) State agencies.—If the Secretary receives 2 or more applications for grants under this subpart from local educational agencies within the same State, the Secretary shall consult with the State educational agency regarding the applications.

“(e) Fiscal agent.—The fiscal agent for the receipt of grant funds under this subpart shall be an institution of higher education participating in the partnership or joint venture, as described in section 2163(2)(A), that is establishing or operating the Teachers Institute.

“(f) Limitations.—A grant under this subpart—

“(1) shall provide grant funds for a period of not more than 5 years; and
“(2) shall be in an amount that is not more than 50 percent of the total costs of the eligible activities supported under the grant, as determined by the Secretary.

“SEC. 2165. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.

“Grant funds under this subpart may be used—

“(1) for the planning, development, establishment, and operation of a Teachers Institute;

“(2) for additional assistance to an established Teachers Institute for its further development and for its support of the planning, development, establishment, and operation of a Teachers Institute under paragraph (1);

“(3) for the salary and necessary expenses of a full-time director for a Teachers Institute to plan and manage the Teachers Institute and to act as a liaison between all local educational agencies and institutions of higher education participating in the Teachers Institute;

“(4) to provide suitable office space, staff, equipment, and supplies, and to pay other operating expenses, for the Teachers Institute;

“(5) to provide a stipend for teachers participating in the collaborative seminars conducted by the Institute in the sciences and humanities and to
provide remuneration for members of the faculty of
the participating institution of higher education
leading the seminars; and
“(6) to provide for the dissemination, through
print and electronic means, of curriculum units pre-
pared in the seminars conducted by the Teachers In-
stitute.

“SEC. 2166. UNDERSTANDINGS AND PROCEDURES.

“A grantee receiving a grant under this subpart shall
abide by the following understandings and procedures:
“(1) PARTNERSHIP.—The essential relationship
of a Teachers Institute is a partnership between a
local educational agency and an institution of higher
education. A grantee shall demonstrate a long-term
commitment on behalf of the participating local edu-
cational agency and institution of higher education
to the support, including the financial support, of
the work of the Teachers Institute.
“(2) SEMINARS.—A Teachers Institute spon-
sors seminars led by faculty of the institution of
higher education partner and attended by teachers
from the local educational agency partner. A grantee
shall provide participating teachers the ability to
play an essential role in planning, organizing, con-
ducting, and evaluating the seminars and in encouraging the future participation of other teachers.

“(3) CURRICULUM UNIT.—A seminar described in paragraph (2) uses a collaborative process, in a collegial environment, to develop a curriculum unit for use by participating teachers that sets forth the subject matter to be presented and the pedagogical strategies to be employed. A grantee shall enable participating teachers to develop a curriculum unit, based on the subject matter presented, for use in the teachers’ classrooms.

“(4) ELIGIBILITY AND REMUNERATION.—Seminars are open to all partnership teachers with teaching assignments relevant to the seminar topics. Seminar leaders receive remuneration for their work and participating teachers receive an honorarium or stipend upon the successful completion of the seminar. A grantee shall provide seminar leaders and participating teachers with remuneration to allow them to participate in the Teachers Institute.

“(5) DIRECTION.—The operations of a Teachers Institute are managed by a full-time director who reports to both partners but is accountable to the institution of higher education partner. A grant-
ee shall appoint a director to manage and coordinate
the work of the Teachers Institute.

“(6) EVALUATION.—A grantee shall annually
review the activities of the Teachers Institute and
disseminate the results to members of the Teachers
Institute’s partnership community.

“SEC. 2167. APPLICATION, APPROVAL, AND AGREEMENT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—To receive a grant under this
subpart, a Teachers Institute, or a partnership or joint
venture described in section 2163(2)(A) that is proposing
to establish a Teachers Institute, shall submit an applica-
tion to the Secretary that—

“(1) meets the requirement of this subpart and
any regulations under this subpart;

“(2) includes a description of how the applicant
intends to use funds provided under the grant;

“(3) includes such information as the Secretary
may require to apply the criteria described in section
2164(c);

“(4) includes measurable objectives for the use
of the funds provided under the grant; and

“(5) contains such other information and assur-
ances as the Secretary may require.

“(b) APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall—
“(1) promptly evaluate an application received for a grant under this subpart; and

“(2) notify the applicant, within 90 days of the receipt of a completed application, of the Secretary’s determination.

“(c) AGREEMENT.—Upon approval of an application, the Secretary and the applicant shall enter into a comprehensive agreement covering the entire period of the grant.

“SEC. 2168. REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS.

“(a) REPORT.—Each grantee under this subpart shall report annually to the Secretary on the progress of the Teachers Institute in achieving the purpose of this subpart.

“(b) EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION.—The Secretary shall evaluate the activities funded under this subpart and submit an annual report regarding the activities assisted under this subpart to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives. The Secretary shall broadly disseminate successful practices developed by Teachers Institutes.

“(c) REVOCATION.—If the Secretary determines that a grantee is not making substantial progress in meeting the purposes of the grant by the end of the second year...
of the grant under this subpart, the Secretary may take appropriate action, including revocation of further payments under the grant, to ensure that the funds available under this subpart are used in the most effective manner.

“SEC. 2169. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“...There are authorized to be appropriated, for grants (including planning grants) and technical assistance under this subpart, such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012 and each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.”

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2151 the following:

“SUBPART 6—TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTES

"Sec. 2161. Short title.
"Sec. 2162. Findings and purpose.
"Sec. 2163. Definitions.
"Sec. 2164. Program authorized.
"Sec. 2165. Eligible activities.
"Sec. 2166. Understandings and procedures.
"Sec. 2167. Application, approval, and agreement.
"Sec. 2168. Reports and evaluations.”.