

# ***Strengthening Loan Forgiveness for Public Servants During the COVID-19 Crisis Act***

Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)

*The Strengthening Loan Forgiveness for Public Servants During the COVID-19 Crisis Act* expands the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLFP) to provide meaningful student debt relief to teachers, police officers, public health workers and others who dedicate their careers to public service. The legislation would eliminate uncertainty for borrowers, and further incentivize public service by allowing borrowers to receive forgiveness for their loans in qualifying intervals. Additionally, the Act would provide support for public servants and frontline workers whose employment may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Specifically, the legislation would:**

- Recognize the burden posed by COVID-19 on public servants and the financial impacts COVID-19 could have on borrowers.
- Allow for loan cancellation in intervals based on the length of public service:
  - 15% at 2 years;
  - An additional 15% at 4 years;
  - An additional 20% at 6 years;
  - An additional 20% at 8 years;
  - The final 30% at 10 years.
- Allow for an individual to apply for loan forgiveness for a period of public service that has already ended, with certification of employment.
- Provide for protections for those public servants whose employment and work in public service may have been impacted by COVID-19. These protections include:
  - Continued loan forgiveness during the length of the public health emergency in case a borrower is forced to leave their job due to a furlough, illness, layoff, or for caregiving purposes;
    - Any payment made during the period following the freeze on payments and interest established in the CARES Act would count towards PSLF, if the borrower reenters public service upon the end of the public health emergency.

Original co-sponsors: U.S. Senators Tom Udall (D-NM), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Tina Smith (D-MN), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), and Patrick Leahy (D-VT).