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SENATE PASSES BILL TO REPEAL PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE PENALTIES FOR STUDENT LOAN DEFAULT

BOSTON — **Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer)** and the Massachusetts State Senate voted Thursday to pass legislation to protect individuals who default on their educational loans from professional licensure penalties.

The bill, S.2266, *An Act to prevent bureaucratic overreach in the collection of student debt*, will repeal a state law passed in 1990, which created professional licensure consequences for educational loan defaulters.

Under existing law, the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA) and the Massachusetts Higher Education Assistance Corporation – a former loan guarantor that now operates as American Student Assistance, a national nonprofit – can request that a borrower’s state-issued professional or occupational certificate, registration or license be suspended, revoked or cancelled for default on educational loans made or administered by either entity.

"Student debt is difficult to handle and default can happen easily," Said Senator Gobi. "A person’s ability to pay that debt is directly tied to the ability to work, making sure professional licenses are not affected by debt is a positive step."

"When we encourage high school students to go to college, many have no choice but to assume debt to finance their education," said **Senate President Harriette L. Chandler (D-Worcester)**. "This debt is a major burden in and of itself, and it should not limit a person’s ability to work and live a fulfilling life. This legislation ensures that post-graduates in Massachusetts are protected, and I thank Senator Brownsberger for his efforts on this bill."

The bill now moves to the House of Representatives for further consideration.

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