

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Higher Education Student Assistance Act is  
5 amended by adding Section 65.110 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.110 new)

7 Sec. 65.110. Post-Master of Social Work School Social Work  
8 Professional Educator License scholarship.

9 (a) Subject to appropriation, beginning with awards for  
10 the 2022-2023 academic year, the Commission shall award  
11 annually up to 250 Post-Master of Social Work School Social  
12 Work Professional Educator License scholarships to a person  
13 who:

14 (1) holds a valid Illinois-licensed clinical social  
15 work license or social work license;

16 (2) has obtained a master's degree in social work from  
17 an approved program;

18 (3) is a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen;  
19 and

20 (4) submits an application to the Commission for such  
21 scholarship and agrees to take courses to obtain an  
22 Illinois Professional Educator License with an endorsement  
23 in School Social Work.

1       (b) If an appropriation for this Section for a given  
2 fiscal year is insufficient to provide scholarships to all  
3 qualified applicants, the Commission shall allocate the  
4 appropriation in accordance with this subsection (b). If funds  
5 are insufficient to provide all qualified applicants with a  
6 scholarship as authorized by this Section, the Commission  
7 shall allocate the available scholarship funds for that fiscal  
8 year to qualified applicants who submit a complete application  
9 on or before a date specified by the Commission, based on the  
10 following order of priority:

11           (1) firstly, to students who received a scholarship  
12 under this Section in the prior academic year and who  
13 remain eligible for a scholarship under this Section;

14           (2) secondly, to new, qualified applicants who are  
15 members of a racial minority, as defined in subsection  
16 (c); and

17           (3) finally, to other new, qualified applicants in  
18 accordance with this Section.

19       (c) Scholarships awarded under this Section shall be  
20 issued pursuant to rules adopted by the Commission. In  
21 awarding scholarships, the Commission shall give priority to  
22 those applicants who are members of a racial minority. Racial  
23 minorities are underrepresented as school social workers in  
24 elementary and secondary schools in this State, and the  
25 General Assembly finds that it is in the interest of this State  
26 to provide them with priority consideration for programs that

1 encourage their participation in this field and thereby foster  
2 a profession that is more reflective of the diversity of  
3 Illinois students and the parents they will serve. A more  
4 reflective workforce in school social work allows improved  
5 outcomes for students and a better utilization of services.  
6 Therefore, the Commission shall give priority to those  
7 applicants who are members of a racial minority. In this  
8 subsection (c), "racial minority" means a person who is a  
9 citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident  
10 alien of the United States and who is:

11 (1) Black (a person having origins in any of the black  
12 racial groups in Africa);

13 (2) Hispanic (a person of Spanish or Portuguese  
14 culture with origins in Mexico, South or Central America,  
15 or the Caribbean Islands, regardless of race);

16 (3) Asian American (a person having origins in any of  
17 the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the  
18 Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands); or

19 (4) American Indian or Alaskan Native (a person having  
20 origins in any of the original peoples of North America).

21 (d) Each scholarship shall be applied to the payment of  
22 tuition and mandatory fees at the University of Illinois,  
23 Southern Illinois University, Chicago State University,  
24 Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University,  
25 Illinois State University, Northeastern Illinois University,  
26 Northern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University.

1 Each scholarship may be applied to pay tuition and mandatory  
2 fees required to obtain an Illinois Professional Educator  
3 License with an endorsement in School Social Work.

4 (e) The Commission shall make tuition and fee payments  
5 directly to the qualified institution of higher learning that  
6 the applicant attends.

7 (f) Any person who has accepted a scholarship under this  
8 Section must, within one year after graduation or termination  
9 of enrollment in a Post-Master of Social Work Professional  
10 Education License with an endorsement in School Social Work  
11 program, begin working as a school social worker at a public or  
12 nonpublic not-for-profit preschool, elementary school, or  
13 secondary school located in this State for at least 2 of the 5  
14 years immediately following that graduation or termination,  
15 excluding, however, from the computation of that 5-year  
16 period: (i) any time up to 3 years spent in the military  
17 service, whether such service occurs before or after the  
18 person graduates; (ii) the time that person is a person with a  
19 temporary total disability for a period of time not to exceed 3  
20 years, as established by the sworn affidavit of a qualified  
21 physician; and (iii) the time that person is seeking and  
22 unable to find full-time employment as a school social worker  
23 at a State public or nonpublic not-for-profit preschool,  
24 elementary school, or secondary school.

25 (g) If a recipient of a scholarship under this Section  
26 fails to fulfill the work obligation set forth in subsection

1 (f), the Commission shall require the recipient to repay the  
2 amount of the scholarships received, prorated according to the  
3 fraction of the obligation not completed, at a rate of  
4 interest equal to 5%, and, if applicable, reasonable  
5 collection fees. The Commission is authorized to establish  
6 rules relating to its collection activities for repayment of  
7 scholarships under this Section. All repayments collected  
8 under this Section shall be forwarded to the State Comptroller  
9 for deposit into this State's General Revenue Fund.

10 A recipient of a scholarship under this Section is not  
11 considered to be in violation of the failure to fulfill the  
12 work obligation under subsection (f) if the recipient (i)  
13 enrolls on a full-time basis as a graduate student in a course  
14 of study related to the field of social work at a qualified  
15 Illinois institution of higher learning; (ii) is serving, not  
16 in excess of 3 years, as a member of the armed services of the  
17 United States; (iii) is a person with a temporary total  
18 disability for a period of time not to exceed 3 years, as  
19 established by the sworn affidavit of a qualified physician;  
20 (iv) is seeking and unable to find full-time employment as a  
21 school social worker at an Illinois public or nonpublic  
22 not-for-profit preschool, elementary school, or secondary  
23 school that satisfies the criteria set forth in subsection (f)  
24 and is able to provide evidence of that fact; or (v) becomes a  
25 person with a permanent total disability, as established by  
26 the sworn affidavit of a qualified physician.

1           Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect January  
2    1, 2022.