

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. Purpose. The purpose of this amendatory Act of
5 the 103rd General Assembly is to address health care needs
6 within the Department of Corrections by providing nursing
7 scholarship assistance to eligible students in the State,
8 subject to appropriation, and shall require a public service
9 commitment agreement to work within the Department of
10 Corrections for a specified duration. The Program shall be
11 administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission and
12 with the guidance and assistance of the Department.

13 Section 10. The Higher Education Student Assistance Act is
14 amended by adding Section 65.125 as follows:

15 (110 ILCS 947/65.125 new)

16 Sec. 65.125. Nursing in correctional facilities
17 scholarship program.

18 (a) In this Section:

19 "Eligible institution" means a public community college, a
20 private junior college, a hospital-based diploma in nursing
21 program, or a public or private college or university with a
22 pre-licensure nursing education program located in this State

1 that has received approval by the Department of Financial and
2 Professional Regulation for an associate degree in nursing
3 program, an associate degree in applied sciences in nursing
4 program, a hospital-based diploma in nursing program, a
5 baccalaureate degree in nursing program, a graduate degree in
6 nursing program, or a certificate in a practical nursing
7 program approved by the Board of Higher Education or any
8 successor agency with similar authority. An eligible
9 institution must maintain compliance with all applicable State
10 and federal laws. An eligible institution is not necessarily
11 eligible for other programs administered by the Commission and
12 is not required to meet the definition of institution of
13 higher learning, qualified institution, or institution as
14 defined in Section 10 of this Act. The Commission may
15 establish by rule additional requirements for an eligible
16 institution.

17 "Department" means the Department of Corrections.

18 (b) Subject to appropriation, the Commission shall award a
19 nursing in correctional facilities scholarship to each
20 qualified applicant. To determine the maximum annual
21 scholarship amount available to a recipient enrolled full
22 time, the Commission shall consider tuition and fee charges
23 and projected living expenses at community colleges and
24 universities statewide under the following criteria:

25 (1) To determine the maximum scholarship amount for a
26 recipient pursuing a certificate in practical nursing at

1 any eligible institution, a hospital-based diploma in
2 nursing, or an associates degree or diploma in nursing
3 from an community college, the Commission shall add the
4 weighted tuition and fees charged by community colleges in
5 this State to the uniform living allowance reported in the
6 weighted Monetary Award Program budget.

7 (2) To determine the maximum scholarship amount for a
8 recipient pursuing an associates, baccalaureate, or
9 graduate degree in nursing at a private 2-year college or
10 a public or private 4-year eligible institution in this
11 State, the Commission shall add the weighted tuition and
12 fees charged by institutions of higher learning to the
13 uniform living allowance reported in the weighted Monetary
14 Award Program budget.

15 The total amount of scholarship assistance awarded by the
16 Commission under this Section to an eligible applicant in any
17 given fiscal year, when added to other financial assistance
18 awarded to that individual for that year, may not exceed the
19 cost of attendance at the institution at which the student is
20 enrolled. If the amount of financial assistance to be awarded
21 to a qualified student exceeds the cost of attendance at the
22 institution at which the student is enrolled, the scholarship
23 awarded under this Section shall be reduced by an amount equal
24 to the amount by which the combined financial assistance
25 available to the student exceeds the cost of attendance.

26 (c) The Commission shall, on an annual basis, receive and

1 consider applications for scholarship assistance under the
2 program. An applicant is eligible for a scholarship under the
3 program if the Commission finds that the applicant meets the
4 following criteria:

5 (1) Is a resident of Illinois.

6 (2) Is enrolled in an eligible institution in the
7 State on at least a part-time basis.

8 (3) Expressed a commitment to work as a nurse in the
9 Department of Corrections for a minimum of 3 years.

10 (4) Is not receiving financial assistance during the
11 same academic year through a scholarship program under the
12 Nursing Education Scholarship Law.

13 When selecting scholarship recipients from among eligible
14 applicants, the Commission shall give preference first to
15 previous recipients of a scholarship under the program,
16 provided that the recipient continues to meet the eligibility
17 requirements set forth in this Section and maintains
18 satisfactory academic progress as determined by the
19 institution of higher education at which the recipient is
20 enrolled. In considering new recipients, the Commission shall
21 prioritize funding for students with financial need, as
22 determined by the Commission. In considering new recipients,
23 the Commission shall prioritize funding for students with
24 financial need, as determined by the Commission.

25 (d) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for an
26 academic year, each recipient of a scholarship awarded under

1 the program must sign an agreement pledging that, within the
2 one-year period following the termination of the academic
3 program for which the recipient was awarded a scholarship, the
4 recipient shall:

5 (1) begin working as a nurse in the Department for a
6 period of not less than 3 years; and

7 (2) upon request of the Commission and subject to
8 confirmation with the Department, provide the Commission
9 with evidence that the recipient is fulfilling or has
10 fulfilled the terms of the public service agreement
11 required under this subsection (d).

12 (e) A recipient may receive scholarship assistance under
13 the program for the equivalent of 8 semesters or 16 quarters of
14 full-time enrollment.

15 (f) All applications for a scholarship under the program
16 shall be made to the Commission in a form and manner prescribed
17 by the Commission. An applicant shall also submit any
18 supporting documents deemed necessary by the Commission at the
19 time of application.

20 (g) All scholarship funds distributed under the program
21 shall be paid to the eligible institution on behalf of the
22 scholarship recipient.

23 (h) If a recipient of a scholarship awarded under this
24 Section fails to fulfill the service agreement required under
25 the program, the Commission shall require the recipient to
26 repay the amount of the scholarship or scholarships received,

1 prorated according to the fraction of the service agreement
2 not completed, plus interest at a rate of 5% and, if
3 applicable, reasonable collection fees. Payments received by
4 the Commission under this Section shall be remitted to the
5 State Comptroller for deposit into the General Revenue Fund.

6 (i) A recipient of a scholarship awarded by the Commission
7 under the program shall not be in violation of the agreement
8 entered into pursuant to this Article if the recipient is (i)
9 serving as a member of the Armed Services or Reserve Forces of
10 the United States, (ii) a person with a temporary total
11 disability, as established by a sworn affidavit of a qualified
12 physician, (iii) taking additional courses, on at least a
13 half-time basis, related to nursing, or (iv) extenuating and
14 specific circumstances in which the recipient is unable to
15 achieve full-time employment as a nurse with the Department
16 and is able to provide evidence of that fact, subject to review
17 by the Commission. Any extension of the period during which
18 the service requirement must be fulfilled shall be subject to
19 limitations of duration established by the Commission and with
20 the guidance and assistance of the Department.

21 (j) In providing guidance and assistance to the
22 Commission, the Department may collaborate with accredited
23 State nursing schools to facilitate the scholarship program.
24 Eligible institutions are encouraged to support and promote
25 the program among their nursing students.

26 (k) The Department, in consultation with the Commission,

1 shall provide an annual report on the program's effectiveness,
2 including the number of recipients, their service periods, and
3 any challenges faced.

4 (l) The funding for the program shall be subject to
5 appropriation. Additional contributions from private entities,
6 philanthropic organizations, or federal grants may supplement
7 the scholarship.

8 (m) The Commission shall administer the grant program
9 established by this Section and shall make all necessary and
10 proper rules not inconsistent with this Section for its
11 effective implementation with the guidance and assistance of
12 the Department.

13 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
14 2025.