

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 changing Section 25 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/25)

7 Sec. 25. State scholar program.

8 (a) An applicant is eligible to be designated a State
9 Scholar when the Commission finds the candidate:

10 (1) is a resident of this State and a citizen or
11 permanent resident of the United States;

12 (2) has successfully completed the program of
13 instruction at an approved high school, or is a student in
14 good standing at such a school and is engaged in a program
15 which in due course will be completed by the end of the
16 academic year, and in either event that the candidate's
17 academic standing is above the class median; and that the
18 candidate has not had any university, college, normal
19 school, private junior college or public community
20 college, or other advanced training subsequent to
21 graduation from high school; and

22 (3) has superior capacity to profit by a higher
23 education.

1 (b) In determining an applicant's superior capacity to
2 profit by a higher education, the Commission shall consider the
3 candidate's scholastic record in high school and the results of
4 the examination conducted under the provisions of this Act. The
5 Commission shall establish by rule the minimum conditions of
6 eligibility in terms of the foregoing factors, and the relative
7 weight to be accorded to those factors.

8 (c) The Commission shall base its State Scholar
9 designations upon the eligibility formula prescribed in its
10 rules, except that notwithstanding those rules or any other
11 provision of this Section, a student nominated by his or her
12 school shall be designated a State Scholar if that student
13 achieves an Illinois Standard Test Score at or above the 95th
14 percentile among students taking the designated examinations
15 in Illinois that year, as determined by the Commission.

16 (d) The Commission shall obtain the results of a
17 competitive examination from the applicants ~~this Act~~. The
18 examination shall provide a measure of each candidate's ability
19 to perform college work and shall have demonstrated utility in
20 such a selection program. The Commission shall select, and
21 designate by rule, the specific examinations to be used in
22 determining the applicant's superior capacity to profit from a
23 higher education. Candidates may be asked by the Commission to
24 take those steps necessary to provide results of the designated
25 examination as part of their applications. Any nominal cost of
26 obtaining or providing the examination results shall be paid by

1 the candidate to the agency designated by the Commission to
2 provide the examination service. In the event that a candidate
3 or candidates are unable to participate in the examination for
4 financial reasons, the Commission may choose to pay the
5 examination fee on the candidate's or candidates' behalf. Any
6 notary fee which may also be required as part of the total
7 application shall be paid by the applicant.

8 (e) The Commission shall award to each State Scholar a
9 certificate or other suitable form of recognition. The decision
10 to attend a non-qualified institution of higher learning shall
11 not disqualify applicants who are otherwise fully qualified.

12 (f) The Commission shall conduct a study detailing all of
13 the following information:

14 (1) The number of students designated State Scholars in
15 2008 and 2009.

16 (2) The number of State Scholars who applied to State
17 universities in 2008 and 2009.

18 (3) The number of State Scholars who were denied
19 admittance into the State universities to which they
20 applied in 2008 and 2009.

21 All data collected from a State university in regards to
22 the study conducted under this subsection (f) must be verified
23 by that university.

24 On or before January 1, 2010, the Commission must submit a
25 report to the General Assembly that contains the findings of
26 the study conducted under this subsection (f) and the

1 Commission's recommendations on how to make State universities
2 more accessible to State Scholars.

3 (Source: P.A. 87-997.)

4 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
5 becoming law.