



Sen. Dan Kotowski

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1 AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 8

2 AMENDMENT NO. _____. Amend Senate Bill 8 by replacing
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Veterans' Home Nurses' Loan Repayment Act.

6 Section 5. Nurse Loan Repayment Program. There is created,
7 beginning July 1, 2007, the Nurse Loan Repayment Program to be
8 administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission in
9 consultation with the Department of Veterans Affairs. The
10 program shall provide assistance, subject to appropriation, to
11 eligible nurses.

12 Section 10. Award; maximum time period; maximum amount.
13 Subject to appropriation, the Commission shall award a grant to
14 each qualified applicant for a maximum of 4 years. The amount
15 of this grant may not exceed \$5,000 per year. The Commission

1 shall encourage the recipient of a grant awarded under the
2 program to use the grant award for payment of the recipient's
3 educational loan.

4 Section 15. Application. All applications for grant
5 assistance under the program must be made to the Commission in
6 a form and manner prescribed by the Commission. Applicants
7 shall also submit any supporting documents deemed necessary by
8 the Commission at the time of application.

9 Section 20. Eligibility.

10 (a) The Commission shall, on an annual basis, receive and
11 consider applications for grant assistance under the program.
12 An applicant is eligible for a grant under the program if the
13 Commission finds that the applicant:

14 (1) is a United States citizen or permanent resident;

15 (2) is a resident of Illinois;

16 (3) is working as a registered professional nurse or
17 licensed practical nurse in a State veterans' home;

18 (4) is a borrower with an outstanding balance due on an
19 educational loan; and

20 (5) has not defaulted on an educational loan.

21 (b) Preference may be given to previous recipients of a
22 grant under the program, provided that the recipient continues
23 to meet the eligibility requirements set forth in this Section.

24 (c) A recipient of a grant under the program must fulfill a

1 separate 12 month period as a registered professional nurse or
2 licensed practical nurse in a State veterans' home for each
3 grant that he or she is awarded.

4 Section 900. The Department of Veterans Affairs Act is
5 amended by adding Sections 8 and 9 as follows:

6 (20 ILCS 2805/8 new)

7 Sec. 8. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Outpatient
8 Counseling Program. Subject to appropriations for that
9 purpose, the Department, in consultation with the Department of
10 Human Services, shall contract with professional counseling
11 specialists to provide a range of confidential counseling and
12 direct treatment services to war-affected Southwest Asia
13 combat veterans and their family members, and to provide
14 additional treatment services to Viet Nam War veterans for
15 post-traumatic stress disorder, particularly those Viet Nam
16 veterans whose post-traumatic stress disorder has intensified
17 or initially emerged due to the war in the Middle East. In
18 consultation with the Department of Human Services, the
19 Department shall:

20 (1) develop an educational program designed to inform
21 and train primary health care professionals, including
22 mental health professionals, about the effects of
23 war-related stress and trauma;

24 (2) provide informational and counseling services for

1 the purpose of establishing and fostering peer-support
2 networks throughout the State for families of deployed
3 members of the reserves and the Illinois National Guard;
4 and

5 (3) provide for veterans' families a referral network
6 of mental health providers who are skilled in treating
7 deployment stress, combat stress, and post-traumatic
8 stress.

9 As used in this Section, "Southwest Asia combat veteran"
10 means an Illinois resident who is, or who was honorably
11 discharged as, a member of the Armed Forces of the United
12 States, a member of the Illinois National Guard, or a member of
13 any reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States
14 and who served on active duty in connection with Operation
15 Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, or Operation Iraqi
16 Freedom.

17 (20 ILCS 2805/9 new)

18 Sec. 9. Veterans Conservation Corps. Subject to
19 appropriations for that purpose, the Department shall create a
20 list of honorably discharged veterans, particularly those with
21 post-traumatic stress disorder and related conditions, who are
22 interested in working on a volunteer basis on projects that
23 restore Illinois' natural habitat. The list is referred to as
24 the Veterans Conservation Corps. The Department shall promote
25 the opportunity to volunteer for the Veterans Conservation

1 Corps through its field offices and through cooperating
2 veterans organizations. Only veterans who grant their approval
3 may be included on the list. The Department shall consult with
4 the Department of Natural Resources to determine the most
5 effective way to market the Veterans Conservation Corps to
6 State agencies and local governmental or not-for-profit
7 sponsors of habitat restoration projects.

8 Section 905. The Property Tax Code is amended by adding
9 Sections 15-165 and 15-167 as follows:

10 (35 ILCS 200/15-165)

11 Sec. 15-165. Disabled veterans. Property up to an assessed
12 value of \$70,000, owned and used exclusively by a disabled
13 veteran, or the spouse or unmarried surviving spouse of the
14 veteran, as a home, is exempt. As used in this Section, a
15 disabled veteran means a person who has served in the Armed
16 Forces of the United States and whose disability is of such a
17 nature that the Federal Government has authorized payment for
18 purchase or construction of Specially Adapted Housing as set
19 forth in the United States Code, Title 38, Chapter 21, Section
20 2101.

21 The exemption applies to housing where Federal funds have
22 been used to purchase or construct special adaptations to suit
23 the veteran's disability.

24 The exemption also applies to housing that is specially

1 adapted to suit the veteran's disability, and purchased
2 entirely or in part by the proceeds of a sale, casualty loss
3 reimbursement, or other transfer of a home for which the
4 Federal Government had previously authorized payment for
5 purchase or construction as Specially Adapted Housing.

6 However, the entire proceeds of the sale, casualty loss
7 reimbursement, or other transfer of that housing shall be
8 applied to the acquisition of subsequent specially adapted
9 housing to the extent that the proceeds equal the purchase
10 price of the subsequently acquired housing.

11 For purposes of this Section, "unmarried surviving spouse"
12 means the surviving spouse of the veteran at any time after the
13 death of the veteran during which such surviving spouse is not
14 married.

15 This exemption must be reestablished on an annual basis by
16 certification from the Illinois Department of Veterans'
17 Affairs to the Department, which shall forward a copy of the
18 certification to local assessing officials.

19 A taxpayer who claims an exemption under Section 15-167 may
20 not claim an exemption under this Section.

21 (Source: P.A. 94-310, eff. 7-25-05.)

22 (35 ILCS 200/15-167 new)

23 Sec. 15-167. Disabled veterans standard homestead
24 exemption.

25 (a) An annual homestead exemption, limited to the amounts

1 set forth in subsection (b), is granted for property that is
2 used as a qualified residence by a disabled veteran.

3 (b) The amount of the exemption under this Section is as
4 follows:

5 (1) for veterans with a service-connected disability
6 of 100%, as certified by the United States Department of
7 Veterans Affairs, the annual exemption is \$15,000;

8 (2) for veterans with a service-connected disability
9 of at least 50%, but less than 100%, as certified by the
10 United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the annual
11 exemption is \$5,000; and

12 (3) for veterans with a service-connected disability
13 of at least 20%, but less than 50%, as certified by the
14 United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the annual
15 exemption is \$2,000.

16 (c) The tax exemption under this Section carries over to
17 the benefit of the veteran's surviving spouse as long as the
18 spouse holds the legal or beneficial title to the homestead,
19 permanently resides thereon, and does not remarry. If the
20 surviving spouse sells the property, an exemption not to exceed
21 the amount granted from the most recent ad valorem tax roll may
22 be transferred to his or her new residence as long as it is
23 used as his or her primary residence and he or she does not
24 remarry.

25 (d) The exemption under this Section applies for taxable
26 year 2007 and thereafter. A taxpayer who claims an exemption

1 under Section 16-165 may not claim an exemption under this
2 Section.

3 (e) For the purposes of this Section:

4 "Qualified residence" means real property, but less any
5 portion of that property that is used for commercial purposes,
6 with an equalized assessed value of less than \$250,000.
7 Property rented for more than 6 months is presumed to be used
8 for commercial purposes.

9 "Veteran" means an Illinois resident who has served as a
10 member of the United States Armed Forces on active duty or
11 State active duty, a member of the Illinois National Guard, or
12 a member of the United States Reserve Forces and who has
13 received an honorable discharge.

14 Section 999. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
15 becoming law."