

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 65.85 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.85 new)

7 Sec. 65.85. Student loan repayment assistance program for
8 public sector attorneys.

9 (a) In order to encourage academically talented Illinois
10 law students to enter and continue working in the public
11 sector, the Commission shall, each year, receive and consider
12 applications for loan repayment assistance under this Section.
13 The Commission shall administer the program and shall make all
14 necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this Section
15 for the program's effective implementation. The Commission may
16 use up to 5% of the appropriation for this program for
17 administration and promotion of the program.

18 (b) Subject to a separate appropriation made for such
19 purposes, each year the Commission shall award a grant to each
20 qualified applicant in an amount equal to 10% of the total
21 amount in law school student loans owed at the time of the
22 initial application. If a grant recipient receives a grant
23 under this Section each year for 10 years and the amount of law

1 school student loans he or she must repay in each of those
2 years is at least 5% of the attorney's gross annual income,
3 then the grant amount for the 10th year shall equal the
4 remainder of the amount that he or she owes on the law school
5 student loans. However, the total amount in grants that a
6 person may receive under this Section must not exceed \$60,000.
7 The Commission shall encourage the recipient of a grant under
8 this Section to use the grant amount awarded to pay off his or
9 her law school student loans.

10 (c) A person is a qualified applicant under this Section if
11 he or she meets all of the following qualifications:

12 (1) The person is a United States citizen or eligible
13 noncitizen.

14 (2) The person is a resident of this State.

15 (3) The person is an attorney licensed in this State.

16 (4) The person has law school student loans to repay.

17 (5) The person is employed in a public sector job, as
18 determined by the Commission, but does not have to be
19 employed as an attorney in that job.

20 (6) The person is not a participant in a federal loan
21 forgiveness program for attorneys.

22 (7) The person agrees to provide at least 30 hours of
23 pro-bono work with a legal aid entity within this State, as
24 determined by the Commission, in consultation with the
25 Illinois Equal Justice Foundation as to those legal aid
26 entities most in need of pro-bono attorneys, each year that

1 he or she receives a grant under this Section.

2 (8) The person's gross annual income is \$80,000 or
3 less.

4 (d) All applications for grant assistance under this
5 Section shall be made to the Commission. The form of
6 application and the information required to be set forth in the
7 application shall be determined by the Commission, and the
8 Commission shall require applicants to submit with their
9 applications such supporting documents as the Commission deems
10 necessary.

11 (e) The Commission, in consultation with the Illinois
12 Public Defender Association, shall give preference to those
13 grant applicants under this Section who serve or shall agree to
14 serve in areas of this State in which a significant shortage of
15 public defenders exists.

16 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
17 2009.