



Sen. Javier L. Cervantes

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10300SB1453sam001

LRB103 27551 RJT 59688 a

1 AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 1453

2 AMENDMENT NO. _____. Amend Senate Bill 1453 by replacing
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the the
5 Illinois Graduate and Retain Our Workforce (iGROW) Act.

6 Section 5. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
7 Section 5.990 as follows:

8 (30 ILCS 105/5.990 new)

9 Sec. 5.990. The Illinois Graduate and Retain Our Workforce
10 (iGROW) Fund.

11 Section 10. The Higher Education Student Assistance Act is
12 amended by adding Section 65.120 as follows:

13 (110 ILCS 947/65.120 new)

1 Sec. 65.120. iGROW scholarship program.

2 (a) As used in this Section:

3 "Eligible applicant" means a student who has graduated
4 from high school or has received a State of Illinois High
5 School Diploma, who has maintained a cumulative grade point
6 average of no less than 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, who is pursuing or
7 intends to pursue a qualifying degree in a qualified
8 institution, and who is entitled to apply for assistance under
9 this Act.

10 "Full-time" means the number of credit hours the
11 Commission determines is full-time enrollment for a student
12 for purposes of the program.

13 "Minority student" has the same meaning as the term is
14 defined under Section 50 of the Higher Education Student
15 Assistance Act (110 ILCS 947).

16 "Program" means the iGROW program created by this Act.

17 "Qualifying degree" means an associate or a bachelor's
18 degree granted by a qualified institution that qualifies an
19 individual to work in a qualifying job, as determined by the
20 Commission.

21 "Qualifying job" means a job selected by the Commission
22 (i) for which a recipient of an award under this Act is
23 pursuing a qualifying degree, (ii) for which the recipient has
24 completed a qualifying degree, or (iii) in which the recipient
25 is working.

26 "Qualified student" means a person (i) who is a resident

1 of this State; (ii) who, as an eligible applicant, has made a
2 timely application for an iGROW scholarship under this
3 Section; (iii) who is enrolled on at least a half-time basis at
4 a qualified institution; (iv) who is enrolled in a course of
5 study approved by the Commission, which includes, but is not
6 limited to (1) computer and information sciences; (2)
7 information technology; (3) information science; (4) computer
8 science; (5) computer systems networking and
9 telecommunications; (6) computer and information systems
10 security or information assurance; (7) management information
11 systems; or (8) any other similarly designed college majors as
12 determined acceptable by the Commission, (v) who maintains a
13 grade point average of no less than 2.5 on a 4.0 scale; and
14 (vi) who continues to advance satisfactorily toward the
15 attainment of a degree.

16 "Recipient" means an Illinois resident enrolled in a
17 qualified institution who receives an award under this Act.

18 (b) Subject to appropriation, and no sooner than the
19 2024-2025 academic year, there is established the Illinois
20 Graduate and Retain Our Workforce (iGROW) Scholarship Program
21 to recruit and train individuals to work in technology jobs
22 that have a high demand for new employees and offer high wages
23 by awarding scholarships.

24 (c) Each iGROW scholarship awarded under this Section
25 shall be determined by the Commission in an amount up to and
26 including the full costs of tuition and fees and room and board

1 of the qualified institution at which the recipient is
2 enrolled if the institution is public, or an equivalent rate
3 established by the Commission for private institutions. The
4 total amount of iGROW scholarship assistance awarded by the
5 Commission under this Section to an eligible applicant in any
6 given fiscal year, when added to other financial assistance
7 awarded to that individual for that year, shall not exceed the
8 cost of attendance at the institution at which the student is
9 enrolled. If the amount of iGROW scholarship to be awarded to a
10 qualified student exceeds the cost of attendance at the
11 institution at which the student is enrolled, the iGROW
12 scholarship shall be reduced by an amount equal to the amount
13 by which the combined financial assistance available to the
14 student exceeds the cost of attendance.

15 (d) The maximum number of academic terms for which a
16 qualified student can receive iGROW scholarship assistance
17 shall be 8 semesters or 12 quarters.

18 (e) All applications for scholarships awarded under this
19 Section shall be made to the Commission on forms which the
20 Commission shall provide for eligible applicants. The form of
21 applications and the information required to be set forth
22 therein shall be determined by the Commission, and the
23 Commission shall require eligible applicants to submit with
24 their applications such supporting documents or
25 recommendations as the Commission deems necessary.

26 (f) Subject to appropriation for such purposes, payment of

1 any iGROW scholarship awarded under this Section shall be
2 determined by the Commission. All scholarship funds
3 distributed in accordance with this subsection shall be paid
4 to the qualified institution and used only for payment of the
5 tuition and fees assessed by the institution and the standard
6 housing and food allowance used for all undergraduate students
7 by the qualified student in connection with his or her
8 attendance at a qualified institution. Any iGROW scholarship
9 awarded under this Section shall be applicable to 2 semesters
10 or 3 quarters of enrollment annually. The qualified
11 institution can only request payment for tuition and fees up
12 to the amount of actual tuition and fee expenses incurred. If a
13 student withdraws after the expiration of the tuition refund
14 or withdrawal adjustment period, the student may receive
15 payment for tuition and fees incurred up to the term award. The
16 housing and food allowance will be prorated based on the
17 qualified institution's return of funds policy.

18 (g) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for any
19 academic year, each recipient of a iGROW scholarship awarded
20 under this Section shall be required by the Commission to sign
21 an agreement under which the recipient pledges that the
22 recipient (i) shall work in the State in a qualified job for a
23 period of not less than one year for each year of scholarship
24 assistance he or she was awarded under this Section; however,
25 in no event shall he or she agree to work in the State in a
26 qualified job for a period of less than two years; (ii) shall

1 work with an employer in the State performing work that is
2 related to the field of study which qualified the candidate
3 for scholarship assistance under this Act; and (iii) shall,
4 upon request by the Commission, provide the Commission with
5 evidence that he or she is fulfilling or has fulfilled the
6 terms of the agreement provided for in this subsection. If a
7 recipient of an iGROW scholarship awarded under this Section
8 fails to fulfill the obligations set forth in this subsection,
9 the Commission shall require the recipient to repay the amount
10 of the scholarships received, prorated according to the
11 fraction of the employment obligation not completed, at a rate
12 of interest equal to 5%, and, if applicable, reasonable
13 collection fees. The Commission is authorized to establish
14 rules relating to its collection activities for repayment of
15 scholarships under this Section. All repayments collected
16 under this Section shall be forwarded to the State Comptroller
17 for deposit into the State's General Revenue Fund. A recipient
18 of an iGROW scholarship shall not be considered in violation
19 of the agreement entered into pursuant to this subsection if
20 the recipient (i) enrolls on a full-time basis as a graduate
21 student in a course of study related to the technology degree
22 for which he qualified for the iGROW scholarship at a
23 qualified institution; (ii) is serving, not in excess of 3
24 years, as a member of the armed services of the United States;
25 (iii) is a person with a temporary total disability for a
26 period of time not to exceed 3 years as established by sworn

1 affidavit of a qualified physician; (iv) is seeking and unable
2 to find full-time employment with a State employer that
3 satisfies the criteria set forth in this subsection and is
4 able to provide evidence of that fact; (v) becomes a person
5 with a permanent total disability as established by sworn
6 affidavit of a qualified physician; or (viii) meets any other
7 criteria that the Commission may deem necessary.

8 (h) Scholarship recipients under this Section who withdraw
9 from a program of computer science or other related major area
10 of study but remain enrolled in school to continue their
11 postsecondary studies in another academic discipline shall not
12 be required to commence repayment of their iGROW scholarship
13 so long as they remain enrolled in school on a full-time basis
14 or if they can document for the Commission special
15 circumstances that warrant extension of repayment.

16 (i) If the iGROW scholarship program does not expend at
17 least 90% of the amount appropriated for the program in a given
18 fiscal year for 3 consecutive fiscal years on or before
19 January 1 in each of those fiscal years, then up to 3% of
20 amount appropriated for the program for each of next 3 fiscal
21 years shall be allocated to increasing awareness of the
22 program. The Commission shall make a recommendation to the
23 General Assembly by February 1 of the year immediately
24 following the end of that third fiscal year regarding whether
25 the amount allocated to increasing awareness should continue.

26 (j) The Commission shall administer the iGROW scholarship

1 program established by this Section and shall make all
2 necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this Section
3 for its effective implementation.

4 (k) The Commission shall establish a methodology for
5 prioritizing applications from applicants who demonstrate a
6 financial need or hardship, applications from minority
7 students, and applications from applicants demonstrating
8 academic excellence.

9 (l) Each fiscal year, the Commission may use up to 5% of
10 money appropriated for the iGROW scholarship program for
11 administration.

12 (m) Scholarships may be made under this Section through
13 the 2029-30 academic year.

14 (n) The Illinois Graduate and Retain Our Workforce (iGROW)
15 Fund is created as a special fund in the State treasury. Moneys
16 in the fund may come from both public or institutional,
17 organizational, or other private entities. All money in the
18 Fund shall be used, subject to appropriation, by the Illinois
19 Student Assistance Commission to implement and administer the
20 program pursuant to this Section.

21 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect January
22 1, 2024."