

1 AN ACT to amend the Higher Education Student Assistance
2 Act by adding Section 65.27.

3 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
4 represented in the General Assembly:

5 Section 5. The Higher Education Student Assistance Act
6 is amended by adding Section 65.27 as follows:

7 (110 ILCS 947/65.27 new)

8 Sec. 65.27. Teach Illinois Scholarship Program.

9 (a) For the purposes of this Section:

10 "Area of identified staff shortage" means a school
11 district in which the number of teachers is insufficient to
12 meet student or school district demand, as determined by the
13 State Board of Education.

14 "Qualified institution of higher learning" means one of
15 the universities listed in Section 65.40 of this Act.

16 (b) The Commission shall implement and administer a
17 teacher scholarship program, to be known as the Teach
18 Illinois Scholarship Program. The Commission shall annually
19 award scholarships to persons preparing to teach in areas of
20 identified staff shortages. These scholarships shall be
21 issued to individuals who make application to the Commission
22 and who agree to take courses at qualified institutions of
23 higher learning that will prepare them to teach in areas of
24 identified staff shortages.

25 (c) Scholarships awarded under this Section shall be
26 issued pursuant to rules promulgated by the Commission.

27 (d) Each scholarship shall be utilized by its holder for
28 the payment of tuition and non-revenue bond fees at any
29 qualified institution of higher learning. Such tuition and
30 fees shall be available only for courses that will enable the
31 individual to be certified to teach in areas of identified

1 staff shortages. The Commission shall determine which
2 courses are eligible for tuition payments under this Section.

3 (e) The Commission may make tuition payments directly to
4 the qualified institution of higher learning that the
5 individual attends for the courses prescribed or may make
6 payments to the individual. Any individual who received
7 payments and who fails to enroll in the courses prescribed
8 shall refund the payments to the Commission.

9 (f) Following the completion of the program of study,
10 the individual must accept employment to teach in an
11 elementary or secondary school in Illinois in an area of
12 identified staff shortage for a period of at least 5 years.
13 Individuals who fail to comply with this provision shall
14 refund all of the awarded scholarships to the Commission,
15 whether payments were made directly to the institutions of
16 higher learning or to the individuals, and this condition
17 shall be agreed to in writing by all scholarship recipients
18 at the time the scholarship is awarded. No individual shall
19 be required to refund tuition payments if his or her failure
20 to obtain employment as a teacher in a school is the result
21 of financial conditions within school districts. The rules
22 promulgated as provided in this Section shall contain
23 provisions regarding the waiving and deferral of such
24 payments.

25 (g) The Commission, with the cooperation of the State
26 Board of Education, shall assist individuals who have
27 participated in the scholarship program established by this
28 Section in finding employment in areas of identified staff
29 shortages.

30 (h) Appropriations for the scholarships outlined in this
31 Section shall be made to the Commission by the General
32 Assembly.