

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, including a resident  
11 attending a Department of Defense school, and a citizen or  
12 permanent resident of the United States;

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

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

1 education.

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

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

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

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

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

13 (f) Subject to appropriation, each State Scholar who  
14 enrolls or is enrolled in an institution of higher learning in  
15 this State shall also receive a one-time grant of \$1,000 to be  
16 applied to tuition and mandatory fees and paid directly to the  
17 institution of higher learning. However, a student who has been  
18 awarded a Merit Recognition Scholarship under Section 31 of  
19 this Act may not be awarded a grant under this subsection (f),  
20 although he or she may still be designated a State Scholar.

21 (g) ~~(f)~~ The Commission shall conduct a study detailing all  
22 of the following information:

23 (1) The number of students designated State Scholars in  
24 2008 and 2009.

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

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

4           All data collected from a State university in regards to  
5           the study conducted under this subsection (g) ~~(f)~~ must be  
6           verified by that university.

7           On or before January 1, 2010, the Commission must submit a  
8           report to the General Assembly that contains the findings of  
9           the study conducted under this subsection (g) ~~(f)~~ and the  
10          Commission's recommendations on how to make State universities  
11          more accessible to State Scholars.

12          (h) ~~(g)~~ The Commission shall adopt all necessary and proper  
13          rules not inconsistent with this Section for its effective  
14          implementation.

15          (Source: P.A. 95-715, eff. 1-1-09; 95-760, eff. 7-28-08;  
16          revised 9-5-08.)

17          Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,  
18          2009.