



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

**HB2466**

Introduced 2/4/2025, by Rep. Carol Ammons

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

110 ILCS 947/10  
110 ILCS 947/65.100

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Removes a provision specifically excluding academic programs for incarcerated students from the definition of "institution of higher learning", "qualified institution", and "institution". In provisions concerning the AIM HIGH Grant Program, removes the grant eligibility requirement that an applicant not be incarcerated.

LRB104 10383 LNS 20458 b

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 Sections 10 and 65.100 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/10)

7 Sec. 10. Definitions. In this Act, and except to the  
8 extent that any of the following words or phrases is  
9 specifically qualified by its context:

10 "Commission" means the Illinois Student Assistance  
11 Commission created by this Act.

12 "Enrollment" means the establishment and maintenance of an  
13 individual's status as a student in an institution of higher  
14 learning, regardless of the terms used at the institution to  
15 describe that status.

16 "Approved high school" means any public high school  
17 located in this State; and any high school, located in this  
18 State or elsewhere (whether designated as a high school,  
19 secondary school, academy, preparatory school, or otherwise)  
20 which in the judgment of the State Superintendent of Education  
21 provides a course of instruction at the secondary level and  
22 maintains standards of instruction substantially equivalent to  
23 those of the public high schools located in this State.

1 "Institution of higher learning", "qualified institution",  
2 or "institution" means an educational organization located in  
3 this State which

4 (1) provides at least an organized 2 year program of  
5 collegiate grade in the liberal arts or sciences, or both,  
6 directly applicable toward the attainment of a  
7 baccalaureate degree or a program in health education  
8 directly applicable toward the attainment of a  
9 certificate, diploma, or an associate degree;

10 (2) either is

11 (A) operated by this State, or

12 (B) operated publicly or privately, not for  
13 profit, or

14 (C) operated for profit, provided such for profit  
15 organization

16 (i) offers degree programs which have been  
17 approved by the Board of Higher Education for a  
18 minimum of 3 years under the Academic Degree Act,  
19 and

20 (ii) enrolls a majority of its students in  
21 such degree programs, and

22 (iii) maintains an accredited status with the  
23 Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of  
24 the North Central Association of Colleges and  
25 Schools;

26 (3) in the judgment of the Commission meets standards

1 substantially equivalent to those of comparable  
2 institutions operated by this State; and

3 (4) if so required by the Commission, uses the State  
4 as its primary guarantor of student loans made under the  
5 federal Higher Education Act of 1965.

6 ~~For otherwise eligible educational organizations which provide~~  
7 ~~academic programs for incarcerated students, the terms~~  
8 ~~"institution of higher learning", "qualified institutions",~~  
9 ~~and "institution" shall specifically exclude academic programs~~  
10 ~~for incarcerated students.~~

11 "Academic year" means a 12 month period of time, normally  
12 but not exclusively, from September 1 of any year through  
13 August 31 of the ensuing year.

14 "Full-time student" means any undergraduate student  
15 enrolled in 12 or more semester or quarter hours of credit  
16 courses in any given semester or quarter or in the equivalent  
17 number of units of registration as determined by the  
18 Commission.

19 "Part-time student" means any undergraduate student, other  
20 than a full-time student, enrolled in 6 or more semester or  
21 quarter hours of credit courses in any given semester or  
22 quarter or in the equivalent number of units of registration  
23 as determined by the Commission. Beginning with fiscal year  
24 1999, the Commission may, on a program by program basis,  
25 expand this definition of "part-time student" to include  
26 students who enroll in less than 6 semester or quarter hours of

1 credit courses in any given semester or quarter.

2 "Public university" means any public 4-year university in  
3 this State.

4 "Public university campus" means any campus under the  
5 governance or supervision of a public university.

6 (Source: P.A. 100-587, eff. 6-4-18; 100-1015, eff. 8-21-18.)

7 (110 ILCS 947/65.100)

8 Sec. 65.100. AIM HIGH Grant Program.

9 (a) The General Assembly makes all of the following  
10 findings:

11 (1) Both access and affordability are important  
12 aspects of the Illinois Public Agenda for College and  
13 Career Success report.

14 (2) This State is in the top quartile with respect to  
15 the percentage of family income needed to pay for college.

16 (3) Research suggests that as loan amounts increase,  
17 rather than an increase in grant amounts, the probability  
18 of college attendance decreases.

19 (4) There is further research indicating that  
20 socioeconomic status may affect the willingness of  
21 students to use loans to attend college.

22 (5) Strategic use of tuition discounting can decrease  
23 the amount of loans that students must use to pay for  
24 tuition.

25 (6) A modest, individually tailored tuition discount

1 can make the difference in a student choosing to attend  
2 college and enhance college access for low-income and  
3 middle-income families.

4 (7) Even if the federally calculated financial need  
5 for college attendance is met, the federally determined  
6 Expected Family Contribution can still be a daunting  
7 amount.

8 (8) This State is the second largest exporter of  
9 students in the country.

10 (9) When talented Illinois students attend  
11 universities in this State, the State and those  
12 universities benefit.

13 (10) State universities in other states have adopted  
14 pricing and incentives that allow many Illinois residents  
15 to pay less to attend an out-of-state university than to  
16 remain in this State for college.

17 (11) Supporting Illinois student attendance at  
18 Illinois public universities can assist in State efforts  
19 to maintain and educate a highly trained workforce.

20 (12) Modest tuition discounts that are individually  
21 targeted and tailored can result in enhanced revenue for  
22 public universities.

23 (13) By increasing a public university's capacity to  
24 strategically use tuition discounting, the public  
25 university will be capable of creating enhanced tuition  
26 revenue by increasing enrollment yields.

1 (b) In this Section:

2 "Eligible applicant" means a student from any high school  
3 in this State, whether or not recognized by the State Board of  
4 Education, who is engaged in a program of study that in due  
5 course will be completed by the end of the school year and who  
6 meets all of the qualifications and requirements under this  
7 Section.

8 "Tuition and other necessary fees" includes the customary  
9 charge for instruction and use of facilities in general and  
10 the additional fixed fees charged for specified purposes that  
11 are required generally of non-grant recipients for each  
12 academic period for which the grant applicant actually  
13 enrolls, but does not include fees payable only once or  
14 breakage fees and other contingent deposits that are  
15 refundable in whole or in part. The Commission may adopt, by  
16 rule not inconsistent with this Section, detailed provisions  
17 concerning the computation of tuition and other necessary  
18 fees.

19 (c) Beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, each  
20 public university may establish a merit-based scholarship  
21 program known as the AIM HIGH Grant Program. Each year, the  
22 Commission shall receive and consider applications from public  
23 universities under this Section. Each participating public  
24 university shall indicate that grants under the program come  
25 from AIM HIGH and shall use the words "AIM HIGH" in the name of  
26 any grant under the program and in any published or posted

1 materials about the program. Subject to appropriation and any  
2 tuition waiver limitation established by the Board of Higher  
3 Education, a public university campus may award a grant to a  
4 student under this Section if it finds that the applicant  
5 meets all of the following criteria:

6 (1) He or she is a resident of this State and a citizen  
7 or eligible noncitizen of the United States.

8 (2) He or she files a Free Application for Federal  
9 Student Aid and demonstrates financial need with a  
10 household income no greater than 8 times the poverty  
11 guidelines updated periodically in the Federal Register by  
12 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the  
13 authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2). The household income of  
14 the applicant at the time of initial application shall be  
15 deemed to be the household income of the applicant for the  
16 duration of the program.

17 (3) He or she meets the minimum cumulative grade point  
18 average or ACT or SAT college admissions test score, as  
19 determined by the public university campus.

20 (4) He or she is enrolled in a public university as an  
21 undergraduate student on a full-time basis.

22 (5) He or she has not yet received a baccalaureate  
23 degree or the equivalent of 135 semester credit hours.

24 (6) (Blank). ~~He or she is not incarcerated.~~

25 (7) He or she is not in default on any student loan or  
26 does not owe a refund or repayment on any State or federal

1 grant or scholarship.

2 (8) Any other reasonable criteria, as determined by  
3 the public university campus.

4 Each public university campus shall allow qualified  
5 full-time undergraduate students to apply for a grant but may  
6 choose to allow qualified part-time undergraduate students who  
7 are enrolling in their final semester at the public university  
8 campus to also apply.

9 (d) Each public university campus shall determine grant  
10 renewal criteria consistent with the requirements under this  
11 Section.

12 (e) Each participating public university campus shall post  
13 on its Internet website criteria and eligibility requirements  
14 for receiving awards that use funds under this Section that  
15 include a range in the sizes of these individual awards. The  
16 criteria and amounts must also be reported to the Commission  
17 and the Board of Higher Education, who shall post the  
18 information on their respective Internet websites.

19 (f) After enactment of an appropriation for this Program,  
20 the Commission shall determine an allocation of funds to each  
21 public university in an amount proportionate to the number of  
22 undergraduate students who are residents of this State and  
23 citizens or eligible noncitizens of the United States and who  
24 were enrolled at each public university campus in the previous  
25 academic year. All applications must be made to the Commission  
26 on or before a date determined by the Commission and on forms

1 that the Commission shall provide to each public university  
2 campus. The form of the application and the information  
3 required shall be determined by the Commission and shall  
4 include, without limitation, the total public university  
5 campus funds used to match funds received from the Commission  
6 in the previous academic year under this Section, if any, the  
7 total enrollment of undergraduate students who are residents  
8 of this State from the previous academic year, and any  
9 supporting documents as the Commission deems necessary. Each  
10 public university campus shall match the amount of funds  
11 received by the Commission with financial aid for eligible  
12 students.

13 A public university in which an average of at least 49% of  
14 the students seeking a bachelor's degree or certificate  
15 received a Pell Grant over the prior 3 academic years, as  
16 reported to the Commission, shall match 35% of the amount of  
17 funds awarded in a given academic year with non-loan financial  
18 aid for eligible students. A public university in which an  
19 average of less than 49% of the students seeking a bachelor's  
20 degree or certificate received a Pell Grant over the prior 3  
21 academic years, as reported to the Commission, shall match 70%  
22 of the amount of funds awarded in a given academic year with  
23 non-loan financial aid for eligible students.

24 A public university campus is not required to claim its  
25 entire allocation. The Commission shall make available to all  
26 public universities, on a date determined by the Commission,

1 any unclaimed funds and the funds must be made available to  
2 those public university campuses in the proportion determined  
3 under this subsection (f), excluding from the calculation  
4 those public university campuses not claiming their full  
5 allocations.

6 Each public university campus may determine the award  
7 amounts for eligible students on an individual or broad basis,  
8 but, subject to renewal eligibility, each renewed award may  
9 not be less than the amount awarded to the eligible student in  
10 his or her first year attending the public university campus.  
11 Notwithstanding this limitation, a renewal grant may be  
12 reduced due to changes in the student's cost of attendance,  
13 including, but not limited to, if a student reduces the number  
14 of credit hours in which he or she is enrolled, but remains a  
15 full-time student, or switches to a course of study with a  
16 lower tuition rate.

17 An eligible applicant awarded grant assistance under this  
18 Section is eligible to receive other financial aid. Total  
19 grant aid to the student from all sources may not exceed the  
20 total cost of attendance at the public university campus.

21 (g) All money allocated to a public university campus  
22 under this Section may be used only for financial aid purposes  
23 for students attending the public university campus during the  
24 academic year, not including summer terms. Notwithstanding any  
25 other provision of law to the contrary, any funds received by a  
26 public university campus under this Section that are not

1 granted to students in the academic year for which the funds  
2 are received may be retained by the public university campus  
3 for expenditure on students participating in the Program or  
4 students eligible to participate in the Program.

5 (h) Each public university campus that establishes a  
6 Program under this Section must annually report to the  
7 Commission, on or before a date determined by the Commission,  
8 the number of undergraduate students enrolled at that campus  
9 who are residents of this State.

10 (i) Each public university campus must report to the  
11 Commission the total non-loan financial aid amount given by  
12 the public university campus to undergraduate students in the  
13 2017-2018 academic year or the 2021-2022 academic year, not  
14 including the summer terms. To be eligible to receive funds  
15 under the Program, a public university campus may not decrease  
16 the total amount of non-loan financial aid it gives to  
17 undergraduate students, not including any funds received from  
18 the Commission under this Section or any funds used to match  
19 grant awards under this Section, to an amount lower than the  
20 amount reported under this subsection (i) for the 2017-2018  
21 academic year or the 2021-2022 academic year, whichever is  
22 less, not including the summer terms.

23 (j) On or before a date determined by the Commission, each  
24 public university campus that participates in the Program  
25 under this Section shall annually submit a report to the  
26 Commission with all of the following information:

1           (1) The Program's impact on tuition revenue and  
2 enrollment goals and increase in access and affordability  
3 at the public university campus.

4           (2) Total funds received by the public university  
5 campus under the Program.

6           (3) Total non-loan financial aid awarded to  
7 undergraduate students attending the public university  
8 campus.

9           (4) Total amount of funds matched by the public  
10 university campus.

11           (5) Total amount of claimed and unexpended funds  
12 retained by the public university campus.

13           (6) The percentage of total financial aid distributed  
14 under the Program by the public university campus.

15           (7) The total number of students receiving grants from  
16 the public university campus under the Program and those  
17 students' grade level, race, gender, income level, family  
18 size, Monetary Award Program eligibility, Pell Grant  
19 eligibility, and zip code of residence and the amount of  
20 each grant award. This information shall include unit  
21 record data on those students regarding variables  
22 associated with the parameters of the public university's  
23 Program, including, but not limited to, a student's ACT or  
24 SAT college admissions test score, high school or  
25 university cumulative grade point average, or program of  
26 study.

1           On or before October 1, 2020 and annually on or before  
2           October 1 through 2024, the Commission shall submit a report  
3           with the findings under this subsection (j) and any other  
4           information regarding the AIM HIGH Grant Program to (i) the  
5           Governor, (ii) the Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
6           (iii) the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives,  
7           (iv) the President of the Senate, and (v) the Minority Leader  
8           of the Senate. The reports to the General Assembly shall be  
9           filed with the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the  
10          Secretary of the Senate in electronic form only, in the manner  
11          that the Clerk and the Secretary shall direct. The  
12          Commission's report may not disaggregate data to a level that  
13          may disclose personally identifying information of individual  
14          students.

15          The sharing and reporting of student data under this  
16          subsection (j) must be in accordance with the requirements  
17          under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of  
18          1974 and the Illinois School Student Records Act. All parties  
19          must preserve the confidentiality of the information as  
20          required by law. The names of the grant recipients under this  
21          Section are not subject to disclosure under the Freedom of  
22          Information Act.

23          Public university campuses that fail to submit a report  
24          under this subsection (j) or that fail to adhere to any other  
25          requirements under this Section may not be eligible for  
26          distribution of funds under the Program for the next academic

1 year, but may be eligible for distribution of funds for each  
2 academic year thereafter.

3 (k) The Commission shall adopt rules to implement this  
4 Section.

5 (l) (Blank).

6 (Source: P.A. 103-8, eff. 6-7-23; 103-516, eff. 8-11-23;  
7 103-605, eff. 7-1-24.)