



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB3855

Introduced 2/6/2026, by Sen. John F. Curran

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act
110 ILCS 205/9.47 new

Creates the Engineering Students of Illinois Scholarship Act. Creates the Engineering Students of Illinois Scholarship Program, to be administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, to provide scholarship assistance until July 1, 2031 to eligible students for engineering-related study at a public university who agree to work as an engineer for the Department of Transportation for a period of not less than 3 years. Allows the Commission to award scholarships to pay the tuition and fees of a student enrolled in an approved program of professional engineering education for the equivalent of 8 semesters or 16 quarters of full-time enrollment. Provides for an additional stipend in an amount not to exceed \$10,000. Establishes the total amount of scholarship assistance, the application process, eligibility requirements, and payments and repayments. Amends the Board of Higher Education Act to require the Board of Higher Education to establish and administer a competitive grant program for public institutions of higher education that award degrees in engineering. Repeals the Act on July 1, 2032.

LRB104 17966 LNS 31403 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 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Engineering Students of Illinois Scholarship Act.

6 Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to attract
7 capable and promising students to the engineering profession
8 and to increase employment and retention of individuals who
9 are working toward or who have received a master's or doctoral
10 degree in engineering.

11 Section 10. Definitions. In this Act:

12 "Approved program of professional engineering education"
13 means a program of engineering approved by the Department of
14 Financial and Professional Regulation.

15 "Commission" means the Illinois Student Assistance
16 Commission.

17 "Institution of higher learning" means a public university
18 of this State.

19 "Program" means the program created under Section 15.

20 Section 15. Engineering Students of Illinois Scholarship
21 Program. There is created, beginning July 1, 2027, the

1 Engineering Students of Illinois Scholarship Program, to be
2 administered by the Commission. The Program shall provide
3 scholarship assistance until July 1, 2031, subject to
4 appropriation, to eligible students for engineering-related
5 study.

6 Section 20. Scholarship award; stipend; maximum time
7 period; maximum amount.

8 (a) Subject to appropriation, the Commission shall award
9 an engineering scholarship to each qualified applicant in an
10 amount sufficient to pay the tuition and fees of the
11 institution of higher learning at which the recipient is
12 enrolled, up to the maximum amount of tuition and fees charged
13 to students enrolled in an approved program of professional
14 engineering education at the institution of higher learning.

15 (b) A scholarship recipient under this Act shall also
16 receive a stipend, the amount of which may not exceed \$10,000,
17 to cover other costs of attendance, including, but not limited
18 to, living expenses. Stipend amounts for recipients enrolled
19 on less than a full-time basis shall be prorated by credit
20 hour.

21 (c) A recipient may receive scholarship assistance under
22 the Program for the equivalent of 8 semesters or 16 quarters of
23 full-time enrollment.

24 (d) The total amount of scholarship assistance awarded by
25 the Commission under the Program to an individual in any given

1 fiscal year, when added to other financial assistance awarded
2 to that individual for that year, may not exceed the cost of
3 attendance at the institution of higher learning at which the
4 student is enrolled.

5 Section 25. Application. All applications for a
6 scholarship under the Program shall be made to the Commission
7 in a form and manner prescribed by the Commission. Applicants
8 shall also submit any supporting documents deemed necessary by
9 the Commission at the time of application.

10 Section 30. Eligibility; work agreement.

11 (a) The Commission shall, on an annual basis until July 1,
12 2031, receive and consider applications for scholarship
13 assistance under the Program. An applicant is eligible for a
14 scholarship under the Program if the Commission finds that the
15 applicant:

16 (1) is a United States citizen or permanent resident;

17 (2) is a resident of this State; and

18 (3) is enrolled or accepted for enrollment on a
19 full-time basis in an approved program of professional
20 engineering education at an institution of higher
21 learning.

22 (b) Scholarship recipients under this Act shall be
23 selected from among eligible applicants based on a combination
24 of academic excellence and financial need, as determined by

1 the Commission.

2 (c) Preference may be given to previous recipients of a
3 scholarship under the Program, as long as the recipient
4 continues to meet the eligibility requirements set forth in
5 this Section and maintains satisfactory academic progress as
6 determined by the institution of higher learning at which the
7 recipient is enrolled.

8 (d) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for an
9 academic year, each recipient of a scholarship awarded under
10 the Program must sign an agreement pledging that, within one
11 year following the termination of the academic program for
12 which the recipient was awarded a scholarship, the recipient
13 shall (i) begin working as an engineer for the Department of
14 Transportation for a period of not less than 3 years and (ii)
15 upon request of the Commission, provide the Commission with
16 evidence that the recipient is fulfilling or has fulfilled the
17 terms of the work agreement required under this subsection.

18 Section 35. Payment to institution of higher education.
19 All scholarship funds distributed under the Program shall be
20 paid to the institution of higher learning on behalf of the
21 scholarship recipient.

22 Section 40. Repayment upon default; exception.

23 (a) If a recipient of a scholarship awarded under this Act
24 fails to fulfill the work agreement required under the

1 Program, the Commission shall require the recipient to repay
2 the amount of the scholarship or scholarships received,
3 prorated according to the fraction of the work agreement not
4 completed, plus interest at a rate of 5% and, if applicable,
5 reasonable collection fees.

6 (b) Payments received by the Commission under this Section
7 shall be remitted to the State Comptroller for deposit into
8 the General Revenue Fund, except that that portion of a
9 recipient's repayment that equals the amount in expenses that
10 the Commission has reasonably incurred in attempting
11 collection from that recipient shall be remitted to the State
12 Comptroller for deposit into the ISAC Accounts Receivable
13 Fund.

14 (c) A recipient of a scholarship awarded under the Program
15 is not in violation of the work agreement entered into
16 pursuant to this Act if the recipient is (i) serving as a
17 member of the armed services of the United States, (ii)
18 temporarily totally disabled, as established by a sworn
19 affidavit of a qualified physician, (iii) seeking and unable
20 to find employment as an engineer with the Department of
21 Transportation and is able to provide evidence of that fact,
22 or (iv) taking additional courses, on a full-time basis,
23 related to engineering. Any extension of the period during
24 which the work agreement must be fulfilled is subject to
25 limitations of duration established by the Commission.

1 Section 80. Rulemaking. The Commission shall adopt all
2 rules necessary for the administration of this Act.

3 Section 85. Repealer. This Act is repealed on July 1,
4 2032.

5 Section 90. The Board of Higher Education Act is amended
6 by adding Section 9.47 as follows:

7 (110 ILCS 205/9.47 new)

8 Sec. 9.47. Competitive engineering grants. In order to
9 increase the number of engineering students graduating from
10 public institutions of higher education, the Board shall
11 establish and administer a competitive grant program for
12 public institutions of higher education that award degrees in
13 engineering. The grants may be awarded on the basis of
14 performance criteria, which shall include, but not be limited
15 to, degree production, student retention, and passage rates on
16 professional licensure examinations.

17 The Board shall adopt those rules that are necessary for
18 the implementation and administration of the grants
19 established under this Section.