

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 adding Section 65.110 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.110 new)

7 Sec. 65.110. School Social Work Shortage Loan Repayment
8 Program.

9 (a) To encourage Illinois students to work, and to
10 continue to work, as a school social worker in public school
11 districts in this State, the Commission shall, each year,
12 receive and consider applications for loan repayment
13 assistance under this Section. This program shall be known as
14 the School Social Work Shortage Loan Repayment Program. The
15 Commission shall administer the program and shall adopt all
16 necessary and proper rules to effectively implement the
17 program.

18 (b) Beginning July 1, 2022, subject to a separate
19 appropriation made for such purposes, the Commission shall
20 award a grant, up to a maximum of \$6,500, to each qualified
21 applicant. The Commission may encourage the recipient of a
22 grant under this Section to use the grant award for repayment
23 of the recipient's educational loan.

1 (c) A person is a qualified applicant under this Section
2 if he or she meets all of the following qualifications:

3 (1) The person is a United States citizen or eligible
4 noncitizen.

5 (2) The person is a resident of this State.

6 (3) The person is a borrower with an outstanding
7 balance due on an educational loan related to obtaining a
8 degree in social work.

9 (4) The person has been employed as a school social
10 worker by a public elementary school or secondary school
11 in this State for at least 12 consecutive months.

12 (5) The person is currently employed as a school
13 social worker by a public elementary school or secondary
14 school in this State.

15 (d) An applicant shall submit an application, in a form
16 determined by the Commission, for grant assistance under this
17 Section to the Commission. An applicant is required to submit,
18 with the application, supporting documentation as the
19 Commission may deem necessary.

20 (e) The Commission shall give priority to those applicants
21 who are members of a racial minority. In this subsection (e),
22 "racial minority" means a person who is a citizen of the United
23 States or a lawful permanent resident alien of the United
24 States and who is:

25 (1) Black (a person having origins in any of the black
26 racial groups in Africa);

1 (2) Hispanic (a person of Spanish or Portuguese
2 culture with origins in Mexico, South or Central America,
3 or the Caribbean Islands, regardless of race);

4 (3) Asian American (a person having origins in any of
5 the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the
6 Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands); or

7 (4) American Indian or Alaskan Native (a person having
8 origins in any of the original peoples of North America).

9 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
10 2022.