

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
5 is amended by adding Section 65.67 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.67 new)

7 Sec. 65.67. Teaching Fellows Program.

8 (a) In this Section:

9 "Completion of the Program" means graduation from a
10 public university in this State.

11 "Program" means the Teaching Fellows Program.

12 "Teacher-training institution" means a public university
13 in this State.

14 "Teaching certificate" means an initial teaching
15 certificate issued under Article 21 of the School Code.

16 (b) A Teaching Fellows Program shall be established and
17 administered by the Commission. Under the Program, the
18 Commission shall provide scholarship loans of \$6,500 per
19 person per year, subject to a separate appropriation made for
20 such purposes, to college juniors and seniors in this State
21 who are interested in preparing to teach in the public
22 schools of this State and who have been accepted into an
23 approved teacher preparation program leading to initial
24 certification. The Commission shall adopt stringent
25 standards, including without limitation a minimum grade point
26 average, for awarding these scholarship loans to ensure that
27 only the top college juniors and seniors receive them.

28 (c) The Commission shall administer the Program in
29 cooperation with teacher-training institutions. Teaching
30 fellows shall be required to be exposed to a range of
31 extra-curricular activities while in college. These

1 activities must be geared to instilling a strong motivation
2 not only to remain in teaching but also to provide leadership
3 to schools.

4 (d) The Commission shall make an effort to identify and
5 encourage minority students and students who may not
6 otherwise consider a career in teaching to enter the Program.

7 (e) A scholarship loan under the Program shall be
8 evidenced by a note made payable to the Commission and shall
9 bear interest at a rate determined by the Commission, but not
10 exceeding the highest rate applicable for education loans
11 made pursuant to Title IV, Part B of the Higher Education Act
12 of 1965 beginning September 1 after completion of the Program
13 or immediately after termination of the scholarship loan,
14 whichever is earlier. The scholarship loan may be terminated
15 by the recipient withdrawing from an approved teacher
16 preparation program or by the recipient not meeting the
17 standards set by the Commission.

18 (f) The Commission shall forgive a scholarship loan if:

19 (1) within 7 years after receiving a teaching
20 certificate, the recipient teaches for 4 years in a
21 public school in this State;

22 (2) within 7 years after receiving a teaching
23 certificate, the recipient teaches for 3 consecutive
24 years, unless the recipient takes an approved leave of
25 absence, in a public school in this State in a local
26 school administrative unit that, at the time the
27 recipient accepts employment with the unit, is a
28 low-performing school system or has been placed on
29 warning status as defined by the State Board of
30 Education; or

31 (3) the Commission finds that it is impossible for
32 the recipient to teach for the number of years required
33 for forgiveness of the loan because of the death or
34 permanent disability of the recipient.

1 A recipient shall continue to be eligible for loan
2 forgiveness under this subsection (f) even if the recipient
3 fails to meet the time limits imposed by this subsection (f)
4 if the recipient (i) enrolls on a full-time basis as a
5 graduate student in a course of study related to the field of
6 teaching at an institution of higher learning; (ii) is
7 servng as a member of the armed services of the United
8 States; (iii) is seeking and unable to find full-time
9 employment as a teacher at a public school in this State and
10 is able to provide evidence of this fact; or (iv) is
11 temporarily disabled, as evidenced by sworn affidavit of a
12 qualified physician. Any such extension of the period during
13 which the teaching obligation must be fulfilled shall be
14 subject to limits of duration as established by the
15 Commission.

16 (g) If a recipient of a scholarship loan fails to
17 fulfill the terms set forth in subsection (f) of this Section
18 for forgiveness of the loan or if the loan is terminated as
19 set forth in subsection (e) of this Section, then the
20 Commission shall require the recipient to repay the amount of
21 the loan received, prorated according to the fraction of the
22 teaching obligation not completed and, if applicable,
23 reasonable collection fees. The Commission is authorized to
24 establish rules relating to its collection activities for
25 repayment of loans.

26 The Commission shall not require the commencement of
27 repayment of a scholarship loan that has not been terminated
28 as set forth in subsection (e) of this Section until, as
29 determined by the Commission, a sufficient amount of time has
30 passed since the recipient received his or her teaching
31 certificate so that the recipient can no longer meet the time
32 limits imposed by subsection (f) of this Section.

33 (h) The Teaching Fellows Revolving Fund is created as a
34 special fund in the State treasury. All funds appropriated

1 to or otherwise received by the Commission for scholarships,
2 all funds received as repayment of scholarship loans, and all
3 interest earned on these funds, shall be placed in the Fund.
4 All money in the Fund shall be used, subject to
5 appropriation, by the Commission for scholarship loans under
6 the Program. With the prior approval of the General
7 Assembly, the Fund may be used, subject to appropriation, for
8 campus and summer program support and costs related to the
9 disbursement of awards and collection of loan repayments.

10 (i) The administrative costs for the Program shall not
11 exceed 5% of the funds appropriated for the Program.

12 (j) The Commission shall make all necessary and proper
13 rules not inconsistent with this Section for the effective
14 implementation of the Program.

15 Section 90. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
16 Section 5.595 as follows:

17 (30 ILCS 105/5.595 new)

18 Sec. 5.595. The Teaching Fellows Revolving Fund.