

1 AN ACT relating to higher education student assistance.

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 changing Section 65.15 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.15)

7 Sec. 65.15. Special education teacher scholarships.

8 (a) There shall be awarded annually 250 scholarships to
9 persons qualifying as members of one either of the following
10 groups:

11 (1) Students who are otherwise qualified to receive
12 a scholarship as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of
13 this Section and who make application to the Commission
14 for such scholarship and agree to take courses that will
15 prepare the student for the teaching of children
16 described in Section 14-1 of the School Code.

17 (1.5) Students currently enrolled in an institution
18 of higher learning whose cumulative grade point average
19 is at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale (or the equivalent as
20 determined by the Commission) and who make application to
21 the Commission for such scholarship and agree to take
22 courses that will prepare the student for the teaching of
23 children described in Section 14-1 of the School Code.

24 (2) Persons holding a valid certificate issued
25 under the laws relating to the certification of teachers
26 and who make application to the Commission for such
27 scholarship and agree to take courses that will prepare
28 them for the teaching of children described in Section
29 14-1 of the School Code.

30 Scholarships awarded under this Section shall be issued
31 pursuant to regulations promulgated by the Commission;

1 provided that no rule or regulation promulgated by the State
2 Board of Education prior to the effective date of this
3 amendatory Act of 1993 pursuant to the exercise of any right,
4 power, duty, responsibility or matter of pending business
5 transferred from the State Board of Education to the
6 Commission under this Section shall be affected thereby, and
7 all such rules and regulations shall become the rules and
8 regulations of the Commission until modified or changed by
9 the Commission in accordance with law.

10 For the purposes of this Section scholarships awarded
11 each school year shall be deemed to be issued on July 1 of
12 the year prior to the start of the postsecondary school term
13 and all calculations for use of the scholarship shall be
14 based on such date. Each scholarship shall entitle its
15 holder to exemption from fees as provided in subsection (a)
16 of Section 65.40 while enrolled in a special education
17 program of teacher education, for a period of not more than 4
18 calendar years and shall be available for use at any time
19 during such period of study except as provided in subsection
20 (b) of Section 65.40.

21 Scholarships issued to holders of a valid certificate
22 issued under the laws relating to the certification of
23 teachers as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection may
24 also entitle the holder thereof to a program of teacher
25 education that will prepare the student for the teaching of
26 children described in Section 14-1 of the School Code at the
27 graduate level.

28 (b) Each year, the principal, or his or her designee,
29 of each recognized public, private and parochial high school
30 maintaining the twelfth grade shall certify to the Commission
31 the names and addresses of students who are completing an
32 application with the intent to prepare to teach in any
33 recognized public, private, or parochial school of Illinois
34 and ranked scholastically in the upper one-half of their

1 graduating class or, for those not yet graduated, whose
2 scholastic rank in the 4-year high school course of study at
3 the end of the seventh semester is in the upper one-half of
4 their class.

5 (c) Each holder of a scholarship must furnish proof to
6 the Commission, in such form and at such intervals as the
7 Commission prescribes, of the holder's continued enrollment
8 in a teacher education program qualifying the holder for the
9 scholarship. Any holder of a scholarship who fails to
10 register in a special education program of teacher education
11 at the university within 10 days after the commencement of
12 the term, quarter or semester immediately following the
13 receipt of the scholarship or who, having registered,
14 withdraws from the university or transfers out of teacher
15 education, shall thereupon forfeit the right to use it and it
16 may be granted to the person having the next highest rank as
17 shown on the list held by the Commission. If the person
18 having the next highest rank, within 10 days after
19 notification thereof by the Commission, fails to register at
20 any such university in a special education program of teacher
21 education, or who, having registered, withdraws from the
22 university or transfers out of teacher education, the
23 scholarship may then be granted to the person shown on the
24 list as having the rank next below such person.

25 (d) Any person who has accepted a scholarship under the
26 preceding subsections of this Section must, after graduation
27 from or termination of enrollment in a teacher education
28 program, teach in any recognized public, private or parochial
29 school in this State for at least 2 of the 5 years
30 immediately following that graduation or termination,
31 excluding, however, from the computation of that 5 year
32 period (i) any time up to 3 years spent in the military
33 service, whether such service occurs before or after the
34 person graduates; (ii) any time that person is enrolled

1 full-time in an academic program related to the field of
2 teaching leading to a graduate or postgraduate degree; (iii)
3 the time that person is temporarily totally disabled for a
4 period of time not to exceed 3 years, as established by the
5 sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; (iv) the time that
6 person is seeking and unable to find full time employment as
7 a teacher at an Illinois public, private, or parochial
8 school; or (v) the time that person is taking additional
9 courses, on at least a half-time basis, needed to obtain
10 certification as a teacher in Illinois.

11 A person who has accepted a scholarship under the
12 preceding subsections of this Section and who has been unable
13 to fulfill the teaching requirements of this Section may
14 receive a deferment from the obligation of repayment under
15 this subsection (d) under guidelines established by the
16 Commission; provided that no guideline established for any
17 such purpose by the State Board of Education prior to the
18 effective date of this amendatory Act of 1993 shall be
19 affected by the transfer to the Commission of the
20 responsibility for administering and implementing the
21 provisions of this Section, and all guidelines so established
22 shall become the guidelines of the Commission until modified
23 or changed by the Commission.

24 Any such person who fails to fulfill this teaching
25 requirement shall pay to the Commission the amount of tuition
26 waived by virtue of his or her acceptance of the scholarship,
27 together with interest at 5% per year on that amount.
28 However, this obligation to repay the amount of tuition
29 waived plus interest does not apply when the failure to
30 fulfill the teaching requirement results from the death or
31 adjudication as a person under legal disability of the person
32 holding the scholarship, and no claim for repayment may be
33 filed against the estate of such a decedent or person under
34 legal disability. Payments received by the Commission under

1 this subsection (d) shall be remitted to the State Treasurer
2 for deposit in the general revenue fund. Each person
3 receiving a scholarship shall be provided with a description
4 of the provisions of this subsection (d) at the time he or
5 she qualifies for the benefits of such a scholarship.

6 (e) This Section is basically the same as Sections 30-1,
7 30-2, 30-3, and 30-4a of the School Code, which are repealed
8 by this amendatory Act of 1993, and shall be construed as a
9 continuation of the teacher scholarship program established
10 by that prior law, and not as a new or different teacher
11 scholarship program. The State Board of Education shall
12 transfer to the Commission, as the successor to the State
13 Board of Education for all purposes of administering and
14 implementing the provisions of this Section, all books,
15 accounts, records, papers, documents, contracts, agreements,
16 and pending business in any way relating to the teacher
17 scholarship program continued under this Section; and all
18 scholarships at any time awarded under that program by, and
19 all applications for any such scholarships at any time made
20 to, the State Board of Education shall be unaffected by the
21 transfer to the Commission of all responsibility for the
22 administration and implementation of the teacher scholarship
23 program continued under this Section. The State Board of
24 Education shall furnish to the Commission such other
25 information as the Commission may request to assist it in
26 administering this Section.

27 (Source: P.A. 91-496, eff. 8-13-99.)

28 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect on
29 July 1, 2002.