



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB1206

Introduced 1/9/2025, by Rep. David Friess

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

110 ILCS 947/65.135 new

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides that the Illinois Student Assistance Commission shall establish the Returning Police Officers Loan Repayment Assistance Program to assist police officers who have left law enforcement with repayment of student loans and in order to help place officers into areas of the State that are the most under-staffed and in need of additional officers. Sets forth qualifications for applicants. Provides that each award under the Program shall be equal to \$6,000 per year (i) for up to 5 years or (ii) until the applicant's student loans are paid off, whichever is sooner. Provides that an applicant has one year from the date that the first student loan assistance payment is received to begin work in a shortage area. Provides that applicants currently working in shortage areas are eligible for the Program, but those who left law enforcement due to reasons other than retirement or a permanent disability shall be given priority for the Program. Provides for rulemaking. Effective July 1, 2026.

LRB104 03625 LNS 13649 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 adding Section 65.135 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.135 new)

7 Sec. 65.135. Returning Police Officers Loan Repayment  
8 Assistance Program.

9 (a) In order to encourage those who are qualified to be  
10 police officers, but who have left law enforcement for other  
11 work, to return to the force, the Commission shall establish  
12 the Returning Police Officers Loan Repayment Assistance  
13 Program to assist those individuals with repayment of student  
14 loans and in order to help place officers into areas of the  
15 State that are the most under-staffed and in need of  
16 additional officers.

17 (b) Subject to appropriation, for the 2026-2027 academic  
18 year and each academic year thereafter, the Illinois Student  
19 Assistance Commission shall receive and consider applications  
20 for the Program. Eligible applicants are those who:

21 (1) have received or plan to receive a diploma in a  
22 field that is related to law enforcement from a public  
23 institution of higher learning;

1           (2) have completed or plan to complete any  
2           certifications necessary to become a police officer;

3           (3) owe a balance on student loans;

4           (4) are currently not in default on any student loan  
5           or do not owe a refund or repayment on any State or federal  
6           grant or scholarship; and

7           (5) work or commit to work as a police officer in an  
8           area experiencing a police officer shortage, as determined  
9           by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board,  
10          in the State.

11          (c) Each award under the Program shall be equal to \$6,000  
12          per year (i) for up to 5 years or (ii) until the applicant's  
13          student loans are paid off, whichever is sooner.

14          (d) An applicant has one year from the date that the first  
15          student loan assistance payment under this Section is received  
16          to begin work in a shortage area.

17          (e) Applicants currently working in shortage areas are  
18          eligible for the Program, but those who left law enforcement  
19          due to reasons other than retirement or a permanent disability  
20          shall be given priority for the Program.

21          (f) The Commission may adopt any rules necessary to  
22          implement this Section.

23                 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,  
24                 2026.