



Sen. Javier L. Cervantes

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10400SB1322sam002

LRB104 07394 LNS 23502 a

1 AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 1322

2 AMENDMENT NO. _____. Amend Senate Bill 1322 by replacing
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 5. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
5 Section 5.1030 as follows:

6 (30 ILCS 105/5.1030 new)

7 Sec. 5.1030. The Mental Health Professional Career
8 Scholarship Fund.

9 Section 10. The Higher Education Student Assistance Act is
10 amended by adding Section 65.135 as follows:

11 (110 ILCS 947/65.135 new)

12 Sec. 65.135. Mental Health Professional Career Scholarship
13 Program.

14 (a) As used in this Section:

1 "Eligible applicant" means a student who:

2 (1) has graduated from high school or has received a
3 State of Illinois High School Diploma;

4 (2) has maintained a cumulative grade point average of
5 no less than a 2.5 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent as
6 determined by the Commission;

7 (3) is pursuing or intends to pursue a qualifying
8 degree at a qualified institution; and

9 (4) is entitled to apply for assistance under this
10 Section.

11 "Full-time" means the number of credit hours the
12 Commission determines is full-time enrollment for a student
13 for purposes of the program established under this Section.

14 "Program" means the Mental Health Professional Career
15 Scholarship Program established under this Section.

16 "Qualified student" means a person who:

17 (1) is a resident of this State;

18 (2) as an eligible applicant, has made a timely
19 application for a scholarship under this Section;

20 (3) is enrolled on at least a half-time basis at a
21 qualified institution;

22 (4) is enrolled in a course of study in the field of
23 professional counseling, professional therapy, social
24 work, psychology, or psychiatry or to become a mental
25 health nurse practitioner or psychiatric pharmacist;

26 (5) maintains a grade point average of no less than a

1 2.5 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent as determined by the
2 Commission; and

3 (6) continues to advance satisfactorily toward the
4 attainment of a degree.

5 "Qualifying degree" means an associate degree, bachelor's
6 degree, master's degree, or doctoral degree granted by a
7 qualified institution with a focus on professional counseling,
8 professional therapy, social work, psychology, or psychiatry
9 or a degree granted by a qualified institution to become a
10 mental health nurse practitioner or psychiatric pharmacist.

11 "Qualifying job" means a job with an employer in this
12 State performing work that is directly related to the field of
13 study that qualified the candidate for assistance under this
14 Section.

15 "Recipient" means a State resident enrolled in a qualified
16 institution who receives an award under this Section.

17 (b) Subject to appropriation and no sooner than the
18 2026-2027 academic year, there is established the Mental
19 Health Professional Career Scholarship Program to recruit and
20 train individuals to work in qualifying jobs that have a high
21 demand for new employees and offer high wages by awarding
22 scholarships.

23 (c) Each scholarship awarded under this Section shall be
24 determined by the Commission in an amount up to and including
25 the full costs of tuition and fees and room and board of the
26 qualified institution at which the recipient is enrolled if

1 the institution is public or an equivalent rate established by
2 the Commission for private institutions. The total amount of
3 scholarship assistance awarded by the Commission under this
4 Section to an eligible applicant in any given fiscal year,
5 when added to other financial assistance awarded to that
6 individual for that year, may not exceed the cost of
7 attendance at the institution at which the student is
8 enrolled. If the amount of financial assistance to be awarded
9 to a qualified student exceeds the cost of attendance at the
10 institution at which the student is enrolled, the scholarship
11 shall be reduced by an amount equal to the amount by which the
12 combined financial assistance available to the student exceeds
13 the cost of attendance.

14 (d) The maximum number of academic terms for which a
15 qualified student may receive scholarship assistance under
16 this Section shall be 8 semesters or 12 quarters.

17 (e) All applications for scholarships awarded under this
18 Section shall be made to the Commission on forms that the
19 Commission shall provide to eligible applicants. The form of
20 application and the information required to be set forth in
21 the application shall be determined by the Commission, and the
22 Commission shall require eligible applicants to submit with
23 their applications such supporting documents or
24 recommendations as the Commission deems necessary.

25 (f) The Commission shall establish a methodology for
26 prioritizing applications from applicants under this Section

1 who demonstrate a financial need or hardship and applications
2 from applicants demonstrating academic excellence. After the
3 first academic year that the Program operates, the Commission
4 shall prioritize the applications of those applicants who
5 received a scholarship under this Section during the prior
6 academic year and who remain eligible for a scholarship under
7 this Section.

8 (g) Subject to appropriation for such purposes, payment of
9 any scholarship awarded under this Section shall be determined
10 by the Commission. All scholarship funds distributed in
11 accordance with this subsection shall be paid to the qualified
12 institution and used only for payment of the tuition and fees
13 assessed by the institution and the standard housing and food
14 allowance used for all undergraduate students by the qualified
15 student in connection with his or her attendance at a
16 qualified institution.

17 Any scholarship awarded under this Section is applicable
18 to 2 semesters or 3 quarters of enrollment annually. The
19 qualified institution may only request payment for tuition and
20 fees up to the amount of actual tuition and fee expenses
21 incurred.

22 If a student withdraws after the expiration of the tuition
23 refund or withdrawal adjustment period, the student may
24 receive payment for tuition and fees incurred up to the term
25 award. The housing and food allowance shall be prorated based
26 on the qualified institution's return of funds policy.

1 (h) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for any
2 academic year, each recipient of a scholarship awarded under
3 this Section shall be required by the Commission to sign an
4 agreement under which the recipient pledges that the recipient
5 shall:

6 (1) work in the State in a qualified job for a period
7 of not less than one year for each year of scholarship
8 assistance he or she was awarded under this Section;
9 however, in no event may he or she agree to work in this
10 State in a qualifying job for a period of less than 2
11 years; and

12 (2) upon request by the Commission, provide the
13 Commission with evidence that he or she is fulfilling or
14 has fulfilled the terms of the agreement provided for in
15 this subsection.

16 If a recipient of a scholarship awarded under this Section
17 fails to fulfill the obligations set forth in this subsection,
18 the Commission shall require the recipient to repay the amount
19 of the scholarships received, prorated according to the
20 fraction of the employment obligation not completed, at a rate
21 of interest equal to 5%, and, if applicable, reasonable
22 collection fees. The Commission is authorized to establish
23 rules relating to its collection activities for repayment of
24 scholarships under this Section. All repayments collected
25 under this Section shall be forwarded to the State Comptroller
26 for deposit into the General Revenue Fund.

1 A recipient of a scholarship is not considered in
2 violation of the agreement entered into pursuant to this
3 subsection if the recipient:

4 (A) enrolls on a full-time basis as a graduate student
5 in a course of study related to the degree for which he or
6 she qualified for a scholarship at a qualified
7 institution;

8 (B) is serving, not in excess of 3 years, as a member
9 of the armed services of the United States;

10 (C) is a person with a temporary total disability for
11 a period of time not to exceed 3 years, as established by
12 sworn affidavit of a qualified physician;

13 (D) is seeking and unable to find full-time employment
14 with an employer in this State that satisfies the criteria
15 set forth in this subsection and is able to provide
16 evidence of that fact;

17 (E) becomes a person with a permanent total
18 disability, as established by sworn affidavit of a
19 qualified physician; or

20 (F) meets any other criteria that the Commission may
21 deem necessary.

22 (i) A scholarship recipient under this Section who
23 withdraws from a course of study that qualified the recipient
24 for a scholarship under this Section but remains enrolled in a
25 qualified institution to continue postsecondary studies in
26 another academic discipline is not required to commence

1 repayment of the scholarship so long as the recipient remains
2 enrolled in a qualified institution on a full-time basis or if
3 the recipient can document for the Commission special
4 circumstances that warrant an extension of repayment.

5 (j) If the Program does not expend at least 90% of the
6 amount appropriated for the Program in a given fiscal year for
7 3 consecutive fiscal years on or before January 1 in each of
8 those fiscal years, then up to 3% of the amount appropriated
9 for the Program for each of next 3 fiscal years shall be
10 allocated to increasing awareness of the Program.

11 (k) Each fiscal year, the Commission may use up to 5% of
12 money appropriated for the Program for administration.

13 (l) The Mental Health Professional Career Scholarship Fund
14 is created as a special fund in the State treasury. Money from
15 both public entities and institutional, organizational, or
16 other private entities may be deposited into the Fund. All
17 money in the Fund shall be used, subject to appropriation, by
18 the Commission to implement and administer the Program
19 pursuant to this Section.

20 (m) Scholarships may be made under this Section through
21 the 2030-2031 academic year.

22 (n) The Commission shall administer the Program and shall
23 make all necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this
24 Section for its effective implementation."