

SB1375



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB1375

Introduced 1/29/2025, by Sen. Chapin Rose

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

110 ILCS 947/65.135 new

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year and subject to appropriation, provides that the Illinois Student Assistance Commission shall, each year, receive and consider applications for grant assistance under a pilot program to be known as the Growing Regional Opportunities for Work (GROW) Illinois Grant Pilot Program. Provides that the Commission may award grants under the program to applicants who are enrolled or plan to enroll at a public community college participating in the program in a certificate, license, or degree program to work in a high-demand industry, among other qualifications. Sets forth provisions concerning grant renewal, posting requirements, the allocation of funding, the application process, matching and unclaimed funds, the grant amount, reporting requirements, and rulemaking. Repeals the provisions on October 1, 2031. Effective immediately.

LRB104 04084 LNS 14108 b

A BILL FOR

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. GROW Illinois Grant Pilot Program.

8 (a) In this Section:

9 "Eligible applicant" means a student or prospective
10 student enrolled at a participating public community college
11 in this State who has yet to receive a certificate, license, or
12 degree to work in a high-demand industry.

13 "High-demand industry" means an industry identified by a
14 public community college, in coordination with local
15 employers, that is growing and where job placement is high.

16 "Tuition and other necessary fees" includes the customary
17 charge for instruction and use of facilities in general and
18 the additional fixed fees charged for specified purposes that
19 are required generally of non-grant recipients for each
20 academic period for which the grant applicant actually
21 enrolls, but does not include fees payable only once or
22 breakage fees and other contingent deposits that are
23 refundable in whole or in part.

1 (b) Beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year, subject to
2 a separate appropriation made for such purpose, the Commission
3 shall, each year, receive and consider applications for grant
4 assistance under a pilot program to be known as the Growing
5 Regional Opportunities for Work (GROW) Illinois Grant Pilot
6 Program. The Commission may award a grant under this Section
7 to an eligible applicant if the Commission finds that the
8 applicant meets all of the following qualifications:

9 (1) The applicant is a resident of this State and a
10 citizen or eligible noncitizen of the United States.

11 (2) The applicant has not yet received a certificate,
12 license, or degree to work in a high-demand industry.

13 (3) The applicant is not incarcerated.

14 (4) The applicant is not in default on any student
15 loan.

16 (5) The applicant is enrolled or plans to enroll at a
17 public community college participating in the program in a
18 certificate, license, or degree program to work in a
19 high-demand industry.

20 (6) Any other reasonable criteria, as determined by
21 the participating public community college.

22 (c) Each community college participating in the program
23 shall determine grant renewal criteria consistent with this
24 Section.

25 (d) Each participating community college shall post on its
26 Internet website the criteria and eligibility requirements to

1 receive an award of grant assistance under this Section. The
2 information posted on the website must include the range of
3 the amount of grant assistance that may be awarded to a
4 qualified student. The criteria, eligibility requirements, and
5 the amounts of the grant assistance available to students also
6 must be reported to the Commission and the Illinois Community
7 College Board. The Commission and the Illinois Community
8 College Board shall post this information on their respective
9 Internet websites.

10 (e) Subject to appropriation, the Commission shall
11 determine the allocation of funds available to each
12 participating community college. The Commission shall allocate
13 to the community college an amount proportional to the number
14 of students who (i) are residents of this State, (ii) are
15 citizens or eligible noncitizens of the United States, and
16 (iii) were enrolled at the community college in the previous
17 academic year.

18 (f) Applications must be made to the Commission on or
19 before a date determined by the Commission and on forms that
20 the Commission shall provide to each participating community
21 college. The form of the application and the information
22 required shall be determined by the Commission. The
23 information shall include, without limitation:

24 (1) the total public community college funds used to
25 match funds received in the previous academic year from
26 the Commission under this Section;

1 (2) the total number of students enrolled in the
2 previous academic year who are residents of this State;
3 and

4 (3) any supporting documents that the Commission deems
5 necessary.

6 (g) Each participating community college shall match the
7 amount of funds received from the Commission with financial
8 assistance for qualified students. The community college is
9 not required to claim its entire allocation.

10 (h) On a date determined by the Commission, the Commission
11 shall make available to all participating community colleges
12 the amount of unclaimed funds, if any. The unclaimed funds
13 must be made available to those participating community
14 colleges in the proportion determined under subsection (e),
15 but must exclude from the calculation those participating
16 community colleges that are not claiming their full
17 allocations.

18 (i) Each participating community college may determine the
19 award amounts for qualified students on a per-student or
20 collective basis. Subject to renewal eligibility, each renewal
21 grant award may not be less than the amount awarded to the
22 qualified student in the student's prior attendance at the
23 participating community college under this Section.
24 Notwithstanding this limitation, a renewal grant award may be
25 reduced due to changes in the student's cost of attendance,
26 including, but not limited to, if the student (i) reduces the

1 number of credit hours, (ii) changes the course of study in
2 which the student is enrolled, or (iii) switches to a course of
3 study with a lower tuition and fee rate. If an eligible
4 applicant awarded grant assistance under this Section is
5 eligible to receive other financial aid, the total grant aid
6 to the student from all sources may not exceed the total cost
7 of the course of study attendance at the participating
8 community college in which the student is enrolled.

9 (j) All money allocated to a public community college
10 under this Section may be used only for financial assistance
11 purposes for students attending the public community college.
12 Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary,
13 any funds received by a public community college under this
14 Section that are not awarded to students in the academic year
15 for which the funds are received may be retained by the public
16 community college for expenditure on students participating in
17 the program or students eligible to participate in the
18 program.

19 (k) Each participating community college must annually
20 report to the Commission, on or before a date determined by the
21 Commission, the number of students enrolled at that college
22 who are residents of this State.

23 (l) Nothing in this Section prohibits a public community
24 college from using funds raised to be used as matching funds.

25 (m) On or before a date determined by the Commission, each
26 participating community college shall annually submit a report

1 to the Commission with all of the following information:

2 (1) The program's impact on tuition revenue and
3 enrollment goals and access and affordability at the
4 community college.

5 (2) Total funds received by the community college
6 under the program.

7 (3) Total amount of funds matched by the community
8 college.

9 (4) Total amount of claimed and unexpended funds
10 retained by the community college.

11 (5) The total number of students receiving grants from
12 the community college under the program, the students'
13 program of study, race, gender, income level, family size,
14 and zip code of residence, and the amount of each grant
15 award. This information shall include unit record data on
16 those students regarding variables associated with the
17 parameters of the program.

18 (n) On or before October 1, 2027 and annually thereafter,
19 the Commission shall submit a report with the information
20 under subsection (m) and any other information regarding the
21 program to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of
22 Representatives, the Minority Leader of the House of
23 Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Minority
24 Leader of the Senate. The Commission's report may not
25 disaggregate data to a level that may disclose personally
26 identifying information of individual students.

1 (o) The sharing and reporting of student data under this
2 Section must be in accordance with the requirements of the
3 federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. All
4 parties must preserve the confidentiality of the information
5 as required by law. The names of the grant recipients under
6 this Section are not subject to disclosure under the Freedom
7 of Information Act. Public community colleges that fail to
8 submit a report under subsection (m) or that fail to adhere to
9 any other requirements under this Section may not be eligible
10 for distribution of funds under the program for the next
11 academic year, but may be eligible for distribution of funds
12 for each academic year thereafter.

13 (p) The Commission may adopt any rules necessary to
14 implement this Section, including rules concerning the
15 computation of tuition and other necessary fees.

16 (q) This Section is repealed on October 1, 2031.

17 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
18 becoming law.