

1 AN ACT concerning loan repayment assistance for nurses.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Loan Repayment Assistance for Nurses Act.

6 Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to
7 establish a program in the Department of Public Health to
8 increase the total number of nurses in this State and
9 encourage nurses to locate in areas where nurse shortages
10 exist by providing educational loan repayment assistance
11 grants to nurses who practice in areas of the State
12 demonstrating the greatest need for nurses.

13 Section 10. Definitions. In this Act, unless the context
14 otherwise requires:

15 "Department" means the Department of Public Health.

16 "Designated shortage area" means an area designated by
17 the Director of Public Health as a nurse shortage area.

18 "Educational loans" means higher education student loans
19 that a person has incurred in attending a registered
20 professional nursing education program.

21 "Nurse" means a registered nurse or registered
22 professional nurse as those terms are defined in the Nursing
23 and Advanced Practice Nursing Act.

24 "Program" means the educational loan repayment assistance
25 program for nurses established by the Department under this
26 Act.

27 Section 15. Establishment of program. The Department
28 shall establish an educational loan repayment assistance
29 program for nurses who practice in designated shortage areas.

1 The Department shall administer the program and make all
2 necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this Act for
3 the program's effective implementation. The Department may
4 use up to 5% of the appropriation for this program for
5 administration and promotion of nursing incentive programs.

6 Section 20. Application. Beginning July 1, 2004, the
7 Department shall, each year, consider applications for
8 assistance under the program. The form of application and the
9 information required to be set forth in the application shall
10 be determined by the Department, and the Department shall
11 require applicants to submit with their applications such
12 supporting documents as the Department deems necessary.

13 Section 25. Eligibility. To be eligible for assistance
14 under the program, an applicant must meet all of the
15 following qualifications:

16 (1) He or she must be a citizen or permanent
17 resident of the United States.

18 (2) He or she must be a resident of this State.

19 (3) He or she must be practicing full-time in a
20 designated shortage area as a nurse.

21 (4) He or she must currently be repaying
22 educational loans.

23 Section 30. The award of grants. Under the program, for
24 each year that a qualified applicant practices full-time in a
25 designated shortage area as a nurse, the Department shall,
26 subject to appropriation, award a grant to that person in an
27 amount equal to the amount in educational loans that the
28 person must repay that year. However, the total amount in
29 grants that a person may be awarded under the program shall
30 not exceed \$5,000. The Department shall encourage recipients
31 to use the grants to pay off their educational loans.

1 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect on
2 July 1, 2004.