

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 65.27 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.27 new)

7 Sec. 65.27. Teach Illinois Scholarship Program.

8 (a) For the purposes of this Section:

9 "Area of identified staff shortage" means a school district  
10 in which the number of teachers is insufficient to meet student  
11 or school district demand or a subject area for which the  
12 number of teachers who are qualified to teach that subject area  
13 is insufficient to meet student or school district demand, as  
14 determined by the State Board of Education.

15 "Qualified institution of higher learning" means one of the  
16 universities listed in Section 65.40 of this Act.

17 (b) The Commission shall implement and administer a teacher  
18 scholarship program, to be known as the Teach Illinois  
19 Scholarship Program. The Commission shall annually award  
20 scholarships to persons preparing to teach in areas of  
21 identified staff shortages. These scholarships shall be  
22 awarded to individuals who make application to the Commission  
23 and who agree to take courses at qualified institutions of  
24 higher learning that will prepare them to teach in areas of  
25 identified staff shortages.

26 (c) Scholarships awarded under this Section shall be issued  
27 pursuant to rules promulgated by the Commission.

28 (d) Each scholarship shall be utilized by its holder for  
29 the payment of tuition and non-revenue bond fees at any  
30 qualified institution of higher learning. Such tuition and fees  
31 shall be available only for courses that will enable the  
32 individual to be certified to teach in areas of identified

1 staff shortages. The Commission shall determine which courses  
2 are eligible for tuition payments under this Section.

3 (e) The Commission shall make tuition payments directly to  
4 the qualified institution of higher learning that the  
5 individual attends for the courses prescribed.

6 (f) Following the completion of the program of study, the  
7 individual must accept employment to teach in an elementary or  
8 secondary school in Illinois in an area of identified staff  
9 shortage for a period of at least 5 years. Individuals who fail  
10 to comply with this provision shall refund all of the awarded  
11 scholarships to the Commission, whether payments were made  
12 directly to the institutions of higher learning or to the  
13 individuals, and this condition shall be agreed to in writing  
14 by all scholarship recipients at the time the scholarship is  
15 awarded. No individual shall be required to refund tuition  
16 payments if his or her failure to obtain employment as a  
17 teacher in a school is the result of financial conditions  
18 within school districts. The rules promulgated as provided in  
19 this Section shall contain provisions regarding the waiving and  
20 deferral of such payments.

21 (g) The Commission, with the cooperation of the State Board  
22 of Education, shall assist individuals who have participated in  
23 the scholarship program established by this Section in finding  
24 employment in areas of identified staff shortages.

25 (h) The scholarships under this Section are subject to  
26 appropriations to the Commission by the General Assembly.