

1 AN ACT relating to higher 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  
5 is amended by adding Section 45.5 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/45.5 new)

7 Sec. 45.5. Firefighter grant program.

8 (a) As used in this Section:

9 "State-controlled university or community college" means  
10 those institutions under the administration of the Chicago  
11 State University Board of Trustees, the Eastern Illinois  
12 University Board of Trustees, the Governors State University  
13 Board of Trustees, the Illinois State University Board of  
14 Trustees, the Northeastern Illinois University Board of  
15 Trustees, the Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees,  
16 the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees, the  
17 Southern Illinois University Board of Trustees, the  
18 University of Illinois Board of Trustees, or the Illinois  
19 Community College Board.

20 "Tuition and fees" does not include expenses for any  
21 sectarian or denominational instruction, the construction or  
22 maintenance of sectarian or denominational facilities, or any  
23 other sectarian or denominational purposes or activity.

24 "Fees" means matriculation, graduation, activity, term,  
25 or incidental fees. Exemption shall not be granted from any  
26 other fees, including book rental, service, laboratory,  
27 supply, and union building fees, hospital and medical  
28 insurance fees, and any fees established for the operation  
29 and maintenance of buildings, the income of which is pledged  
30 to the payment of interest and principal on bonds issued by  
31 the governing board of any university or community college.

1       (b) Any person who has served at least 3 years as an  
2       active volunteer or paid on-call firefighter and who  
3       possesses all necessary entrance requirements shall, upon  
4       application and proper proof, be awarded a grant to the  
5       State-controlled university or community college of his or  
6       her choice, consisting of exemption from tuition and fees for  
7       not more than the equivalent of 4 years of full-time  
8       enrollment in relation to his or her course of study at that  
9       State-controlled university or community college while he or  
10       she serves as an active volunteer or paid on-call  
11       firefighter. If the recipient of any grant awarded under  
12       this Section ceases to serve as an active volunteer or paid  
13       on-call firefighter while enrolled in a course of study under  
14       that grant, the grant shall be terminated as of the date  
15       service as an active volunteer or paid on-call firefighter  
16       ended, and the recipient shall be permitted to complete the  
17       school term in which he or she is then enrolled only upon  
18       payment of tuition and other fees allocable to the part of  
19       the term then remaining.

20       A grant awarded under this Section shall be considered an  
21       entitlement that the State-controlled university or community  
22       college in which the holder is enrolled shall honor without  
23       any condition other than the holder's maintenance of minimum  
24       grade levels and a satisfactory student loan repayment record  
25       pursuant to subsection (c) of Section 20 of this Act.

26       (c) Subject to a separate appropriation for such  
27       purposes, the Commission may reimburse the State-controlled  
28       university or community college for grants authorized by this  
29       Section.