

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to student loans; creating s. 43.45,
 3 F.S.; providing definitions; providing for a financial
 4 assistance program administered by the Justice
 5 Administrative Commission and the Office of the
 6 Attorney General to assist a career assistant state
 7 attorney, assistant public defender, assistant
 8 regional counsel, assistant attorney general, or
 9 assistant statewide prosecutor in the repayment of
 10 eligible student loans; establishing provisions for
 11 program administration; requiring the administering
 12 body to make a payment of a certain amount based on
 13 the length of employment as an eligible career
 14 attorney; providing for funding; requiring the Justice
 15 Administrative Commission and the Office of the
 16 Attorney General to develop procedures to administer
 17 the program; providing an effective date.

18
 19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

20
 21 Section 1. Section 43.45, Florida Statutes, is created to
 22 read:

23 43.45 Student loan assistance program; administration.—

24 (1) As used in this section, the term:

25 (a) "Administering body" means the:

26 1. Justice Administrative Commission if the eligible
 27 career attorney is employed as an assistant state attorney,
 28 assistant public defender, or assistant regional counsel.

HB 77

2014

29 2. Office of the Attorney General if the eligible career
30 attorney is employed as an assistant attorney general or
31 assistant statewide prosecutor.

32 (b) "Eligible attorney" means an assistant state attorney,
33 assistant public defender, assistant regional counsel, assistant
34 attorney general, or assistant statewide prosecutor.

35 (c) "Eligible career attorney" means an eligible attorney
36 who has completed at least 3 years but not more than 12 years of
37 continuous service as an eligible attorney, regardless of
38 whether the eligible attorney had a break in employment of less
39 than 2 weeks while transferring to another employer of eligible
40 attorneys.

41 (d) "Eligible student loan" means a loan that is not in
42 default and that was issued pursuant to the Higher Education Act
43 of 1965, 20 U.S.C. ss. 1001 et seq., as amended, to an eligible
44 career attorney to fund his or her law school education.

45 (e) "Employment anniversary" means the anniversary of the
46 date that an eligible career attorney commenced employment as an
47 eligible attorney.

48 (f) "Maximum available amount" means a number that shall
49 be determined if the amount of the appropriation from the
50 General Revenue Fund to the administering body is less than the
51 amount necessary to fund total payments owed by the
52 administering body. The maximum available amount is calculated
53 by dividing the amount of the appropriation to the administering
54 body by the amount necessary to fund total payments that the
55 administering body owes under paragraph (3)(b) and multiplying
56 the result by the appropriate payment amount in subparagraph

HB 77

2014

57 | (3) (b) 1. or 2.

58 | (2) The administering body shall implement a student loan
59 | assistance program for eligible career attorneys. The purpose of
60 | the program is to provide financial assistance to eligible
61 | career attorneys for the repayment of eligible student loans.

62 | (3) The student loan assistance program is administered in
63 | the following manner:

64 | (a) Within 30 days after the employment anniversary of an
65 | eligible career attorney, the eligible career attorney must
66 | submit to his or her employer a certification affidavit on a
67 | form authorized by the administering body, which certifies that
68 | the eligible career attorney, as of his or her last employment
69 | anniversary, is an eligible career attorney with one or more
70 | eligible student loans. If the employer signs the certification
71 | affidavit, the employer shall submit the affidavit to the
72 | administering body within 60 days after the most recent
73 | employment anniversary of the eligible career attorney.

74 | (b) Upon receipt of a certification affidavit, the
75 | administering body shall make a payment of:

76 | 1. Three thousand dollars or the maximum available amount,
77 | whichever is less, if the eligible career attorney has at least
78 | 3 years, but not more than 6 years, of continuous service.

79 | 2. Five thousand dollars or the maximum available amount,
80 | whichever is less, if the eligible career attorney has more than
81 | 6 years, but not more than 12 years, of continuous service.

82 | (c) A payment under paragraph (b) shall be made by the
83 | administering body:

84 | 1. To the lender of the eligible student loan.

HB 77

2014

85 2. Between July 1 and July 31 of the next fiscal year
86 following receipt of the certification affidavit by the
87 administering body.

88 3. For the benefit of the eligible career attorney named
89 in the certification affidavit and for the purpose of satisfying
90 his or her eligible student loan obligation.

91 4. For the eligible student loan that has the highest
92 current interest rate if the eligible career attorney holds more
93 than one eligible student loan.

94 (d) Payments under paragraph (b) cease upon totaling
95 \$44,000 per eligible career attorney or upon full satisfaction
96 of the eligible student loan, whichever occurs first.

97 (4) The student loan assistance program may be funded
98 annually contingent upon a specific appropriation in the General
99 Appropriations Act for student loan repayment assistance to
100 eligible assistant state attorneys, assistant public defenders,
101 assistant regional counsel, assistant attorneys general, and
102 assistant statewide prosecutors.

103 (5) The Justice Administrative Commission and the Office
104 of the Attorney General shall develop procedures to administer
105 this section.

106 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.