

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to student loans; creating s. 43.201,
 3 F.S.; providing for a financial assistance program
 4 administered by the Justice Administrative Commission to
 5 provide assistance to career assistant attorneys general,
 6 assistant statewide prosecutors, assistant state
 7 attorneys, and assistant public defenders for the
 8 repayment of eligible student loans; defining the term
 9 "eligible student loan"; providing the elements of the
 10 program; providing loan assistance payment amounts;
 11 providing for funding; providing an effective date.

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13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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15 Section 1. Section 43.201, Florida Statutes, is created to
 16 read:

17 43.201 Justice Administrative Commission; student loan
 18 program administration.--

19 (1) The Justice Administrative Commission shall administer
 20 a student loan program for career assistant attorneys general,
 21 assistant statewide prosecutors, assistant state attorneys, and
 22 assistant public defenders. The purpose of the program shall be
 23 to provide financial assistance to assistant attorneys general,
 24 assistant statewide prosecutors, assistant state attorneys, and
 25 assistant public defenders for the repayment of eligible student
 26 loans.

27 (2) As used in this section, the term "eligible student
 28 loan" means a loan that was issued pursuant to the Higher

29 Education Act of 1965, as amended, to an assistant attorney
30 general, assistant statewide prosecutor, assistant state
31 attorney, or assistant public defender to fund his or her law
32 school education.

33 (3) The program shall be administered in the following
34 manner:

35 (a) An assistant attorney general, assistant statewide
36 prosecutor, assistant state attorney, or assistant public
37 defender is not eligible for assistance under the program until
38 the assistant attorney general, assistant statewide prosecutor,
39 assistant state attorney, or assistant public defender has been
40 employed as an assistant attorney general, assistant statewide
41 prosecutor, assistant state attorney, or assistant public
42 defender for 3 years of continuous service on his or her
43 employment anniversary date.

44 (b) After an individual has completed 3 years of
45 continuous service, an affidavit of certification on a form
46 approved by the commission shall be submitted to the Office of
47 the Attorney General, the Office of Statewide Prosecution, the
48 state attorney's office, or the public defender's office, as
49 appropriate. The affidavit of certification shall, upon approval
50 of the Attorney General, statewide prosecutor, state attorney,
51 or public defender, as appropriate, be submitted to the
52 commission.

53 (c) Upon receipt of the certificate, the commission may
54 begin yearly payments in the amount of \$3,000 to the lender that
55 services the eligible student loan. These payments shall be made
56 for the benefit of the assistant attorney general, assistant

57 statewide prosecutor, assistant state attorney, or assistant
58 public defender named in the certificate and for the purpose of
59 satisfying the eligible student loan obligation.

60 (d) Upon an individual's completion of 6 years of
61 continuous service, the annual loan assistance payment amount
62 shall increase to \$5,000. After 12 years of continuous service
63 or upon completion of the payment of the eligible student loan,
64 whichever occurs first, loan assistance shall cease. The total
65 amount of loan assistance permitted under the program for any
66 one assistant attorney general, assistant statewide prosecutor,
67 assistant state attorney, or assistant public defender may not
68 exceed \$44,000.

69 (4) The program shall be funded annually by an
70 appropriation from the General Revenue Fund to the Justice
71 Administrative Commission.

72 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.