

By Senator Campbell

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1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to student loans; creating s.
 3 1009.675, F.S.; creating the For the Greater Good
 4 Attorney Student Loan Repayment Program to increase
 5 employment and retention of attorneys in government
 6 service; providing eligibility requirements;
 7 specifying the loans that may be covered by the
 8 repayment program; requiring the Department of
 9 Education to make payments to eligible attorneys;
 10 providing for program administration; providing that
 11 payments made under the program are not taxable
 12 income; providing for the proration of payments if
 13 insufficient funds are appropriated to make full
 14 payment; authorizing rulemaking; providing an
 15 effective date.

16
 17 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 19 Section 1. Section 1009.675, Florida Statutes, is created
 20 to read:

21 1009.675 For the Greater Good Attorney Student Loan
 22 Repayment Program.—

23 (1) The For the Greater Good Attorney Student Loan
 24 Repayment Program is established within the Department of
 25 Education. The primary function of the program is to increase
 26 employment and retention of attorneys in government service by
 27 making payments that offset student loans issued or guaranteed
 28 by a state or the Federal Government. The department shall
 29 administer the program.

30 (2) To be eligible to participate in the program, an
 31 attorney must meet all of the following requirements:

32 (a) Must be a member of The Florida Bar.

38-00367-17

2017566__

33 (b) Must be employed full time as an assistant state
34 attorney, assistant public defender, assistant attorney general,
35 or assistant statewide prosecutor.

36 (c) Must be employed in this state.

37 (d) Must have completed not more than 10 years of
38 government service, regardless of whether the attorney had a
39 break in employment of less than 2 weeks while transferring from
40 one governmental entity to another.

41 (e) Must be earning less than \$65,000 in salary, as
42 reported to the Internal Revenue Service.

43 (f) Must not have been the subject of any disciplinary
44 action by The Florida Bar.

45 (g) Must have an unsatisfied student loan that was issued
46 or guaranteed by a state or the Federal Government.

47 (h) Must not be eligible for any other state, local, or
48 federal grant or private fund that assists in student loan
49 repayment.

50 (3) Only loans that are not in default and that were issued
51 pursuant to the Higher Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C. ss. 1001
52 et seq., as amended, to fund an eligible attorney's law school
53 education may be covered under the program.

54 (4) Annually, within 30 days after the employment
55 anniversary of an eligible attorney, the attorney shall submit
56 to his or her employer a certification affidavit on a form
57 prescribed by the department which certifies that the attorney
58 was an eligible attorney as of his or her last employment
59 anniversary. The employer shall submit each signed affidavit to
60 the department within 60 days after the most recent employment
61 anniversary of the eligible attorney.

38-00367-17

2017566__

62 (5) (a) Subject to the availability of funds and receipt of
63 the certification affidavit required in subsection (4), the
64 Department of Education shall make one of the following annual
65 payments directly to the financial institution that services the
66 loan:

67 1. Three thousand dollars if the attorney has at least 4
68 years, but not more than 7 years, of continuous government
69 service.

70 2. Five thousand dollars if the attorney has more than 7
71 years, but not more than 10 years, of continuous government
72 service.

73 (b) If the eligible attorney holds more than one eligible
74 loan, payment shall be made for the loan that has the highest
75 current interest rate.

76 (6) If the funds appropriated in any given fiscal year are
77 insufficient to provide the maximum payment for eligible
78 attorneys, the department shall prorate payments for all
79 eligible attorneys by an equal percentage reduction.

80 (7) The Department of Education may adopt rules necessary
81 to administer the program.

82 (8) The For the Greater Good Attorney Student Loan
83 Repayment Program may be funded annually contingent upon a
84 specific appropriation in the General Appropriations Act for the
85 For the Greater Good Attorney Student Loan Repayment Program.

86 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2017.