

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to engineering; amending s. 471.033,
3 F.S.; providing penalties for persons found to have
4 repeatedly engaged in the unlicensed practice of
5 engineering; creating s. 471.056, F.S.; establishing
6 the Engineering Student Loan Assistance Program;
7 providing for the program's management by the Florida
8 Engineers Management Corporation; providing the
9 purpose of the program; providing eligibility
10 requirements; providing the source of funding for the
11 program; requiring that program funds be used only to
12 pay certain costs; authorizing the management
13 corporation to make payments; providing requirements
14 for loan principal repayments; requiring the Board of
15 Professional Engineers to adopt rules; providing
16 construction; providing an effective date.

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

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20 **Section 1. Present subsection (4) of section 471.033,**
21 **Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (5), and a new**
22 **subsection (4) is added to that section, to read:**

23 471.033 Disciplinary proceedings.—

24 (4) Notwithstanding subsection (3), a person who violates
25 this section by engaging in the unlicensed practice of

26 engineering, upon a second or subsequent violation, is subject
27 to a fine imposed by the department which increases as follows:

28 (a) For a second violation, a fine of \$10,000.

29 (b) For a third violation, a fine of \$15,000.

30 (c) For a fourth violation, a fine of \$20,000.

31 (d) For a fifth and any subsequent violation, a fine of
32 \$25,000.

33 **Section 2. Section 471.056, Florida Statutes, is created**
34 **to read:**

35 471.056 Engineering Student Loan Assistance Program.—

36 (1) To encourage qualified candidates to seek employment
37 in areas of this state in which critical engineering shortages
38 exist, there is established the Engineering Student Loan
39 Assistance Program. The Florida Engineers Management Corporation
40 established in s. 471.038 shall manage the program. The primary
41 purpose of the program is to increase employment and retention
42 of licensed engineers who work for a state agency or water
43 management district by making payments toward loans received by
44 students from federal or state programs or commercial lending
45 institutions for the support of postsecondary study in
46 accredited or approved engineering programs.

47 (2) To be eligible for the program, a candidate must have
48 graduated from an accredited or approved engineering program and
49 have received a Florida license as a professional engineer or a
50 professional engineer-in-training.

51 (3) Program funds are derived from the Professional
52 Regulation Trust Fund. Such funds may be used only to pay the
53 costs of tuition, books, and living expenses, at an amount not
54 to exceed \$4,000 for each year of study toward the degree
55 obtained.

56 (4) From the funds available, the management corporation
57 may make loan principal repayments of up to \$4,000 a year for up
58 to 4 years on behalf of selected graduates who meet the
59 requirements of subsection (2), beginning after the selected
60 graduate's first year of employment. All repayments are
61 contingent upon continued proof of employment in a designated
62 state agency or water management district and must be made
63 directly to the holder of the loan. The state bears no
64 responsibility for the collection of any interest charges or
65 other remaining balance. In the event that the designated state
66 agencies or water management districts change, an engineer
67 remains eligible for loan assistance as long as he or she
68 remains employed in the state agency or water management
69 district for which the original loan payment was made and
70 continues to meet all other conditions of eligibility.

71 (5) The board shall adopt rules necessary to administer
72 the program.

73 (6) This section shall be implemented only as specifically
74 funded.

75 **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.