

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 171

Introduced by Assembly Member Beall

January 23, 2007

An act to amend Section 69740 of the Education Code, relating to student financial aid.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 171, as introduced, Beall. Student financial aid: Public Interest Attorney Loan Repayment Program

Existing law establishes the Student Aid Commission as the primary state agency for the administration of state-authorized student financial aid programs available to students attending all segments of postsecondary education. Existing law establishes the Public Interest Attorney Loan Repayment Program, under the administration of the commission, as a student loan repayment program for licensed attorneys who practice or agree to practice in public interest areas of the law, as defined to include service at a local legal services organization, prosecuting attorney's office, child support agency office, or criminal public defender's office, and who meet other designated criteria. Under the program, the commission is authorized to make 3,000 awards of loan assumption annually, and participants are eligible for a maximum of \$11,000 in loan assistance for 4 years of service as a public interest attorney, as specified.

This bill would additionally include service in a county counsel's office as service that would qualify a participant for loan repayment under the program.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 69740 of the Education Code is amended
2 to read:

3 69740. Unless the context requires otherwise, the definitions
4 in this section govern the construction of this article.

5 (a) “Commission” means the Student Aid Commission.

6 (b) “Eligible education and training programs” means education
7 and training programs approved by the commission that lead to
8 eligibility for a license to practice law as a licensed attorney.

9 (c) “Eligible expenses” means reasonable expenses associated
10 with the costs of acquiring an education such as tuition, books,
11 equipment, fees, room and board, and other expenses determined
12 by the commission.

13 (d) “Eligible participant” means a licensed attorney who has
14 been admitted to the program and is a resident of this state and
15 who can provide proof of residency in this state.

16 (e) “Licensed attorney” means an attorney who resides in this
17 state who has successfully passed the California bar examination
18 and has been admitted to practice in this state or has otherwise
19 been licensed to practice law in this state by the State Bar of
20 California.

21 (f) “Loan repayment” means a loan that is paid in full or in part
22 if the participant renders legal services in this state in a public
23 interest area of the law.

24 (g) “Participant” means a licensed attorney who has been
25 admitted to the program and has commenced practice as a licensed
26 attorney in this state in a public interest area of the law.

27 (h) “Program” means the Public Interest Attorney Loan
28 Repayment Program.

29 (i) “Public interest area of the law” means those areas of the
30 law determined by the commission, in consultation with the
31 advisory committee, to serve the public interest, including, but not
32 necessarily limited to, providing direct legal service at a local (1)
33 legal services organization, (2) prosecuting attorney’s office, (3)
34 child support agency office, ~~or~~ (4) criminal public defender’s
35 office, *or* (5) *county counsel’s office*. For the purposes of this
36 article, a “legal services organization” is a legal services provider
37 in California that serves a clientele over 70 percent of whom are

1 low-income persons according to applicable federal income
2 guidelines.

3 (j) “Required service obligation” means an obligation by the
4 participant to provide legal services in this state in a public interest
5 area of the law as established pursuant to this article.

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