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HOUSE BILL 1575

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State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1993 Regular Session

By Representatives Flemming, Jacobsen, Wineberry, Dellwo, Appelwick and J. Kohl

Read first time 02/01/93. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to public sector employment for law school  
2 graduates; and adding a new chapter to Title 28B RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that there is a  
5 shortage of law school graduates entering into public sector  
6 employment. This shortage results in a lack of adequate numbers of  
7 attorneys for citizens seeking public sector legal representation.  
8 Furthermore, many well-qualified graduates are deterred from entering  
9 into public sector employment because of the need to seek high-paying  
10 employment to liquidate accumulated student loans.

11 The legislature finds that creating a legal loan assistance program  
12 for attorneys who enter into public sector employment will help to  
13 increase the number of qualified attorneys employed in the public  
14 sector.

15 It is therefore the purpose of this chapter to:

16 (1) Provide loan repayment assistance to Washington state law  
17 school graduates who are employed in the public sector;

18 (2) Provide public sector agencies with well-qualified legal  
19 counsel; and

1 (3) Encourage greater participation by law school graduates in  
2 public sector employment.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Unless the context clearly requires  
4 otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this  
5 chapter.

6 (1) "Board" means the higher education coordinating board.

7 (2) "Public sector job" means employment by the attorney general's  
8 office, state agencies, the county prosecutor, public defender, county,  
9 municipal or local governmental authorities, the judicial system, or  
10 legal services agencies.

11 (3) "Eligible graduate" means an individual who graduated from a  
12 Washington state law school and is employed in Washington as a licensed  
13 attorney in a public sector job within eighteen months after graduation  
14 from law school.

15 (4) "Program" means the Washington state legal loan assistance  
16 program.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The Washington state legal loan assistance  
18 program is established for licensed attorneys who are graduates of  
19 Washington law schools and employed in Washington state public sector  
20 jobs. The program shall be administered by the board. In  
21 administering this program, the board shall:

22 (1) Select eligible graduates to participate in the loan assistance  
23 program;

24 (2) Adopt rules and develop guidelines to administer the program;

25 (3) Collect and manage payments to eligible graduates;

26 (4) Publicize the program, particularly to maximize participation  
27 among individuals with substantial student loans; and

28 (5) Solicit and accept grants and donations from public and private  
29 sources for the program.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The board, in consultation with the  
31 Washington state bar association, shall establish a planning committee  
32 to develop criteria for the screening and selection of recipients of  
33 the loan assistance program. These criteria shall emphasize factors  
34 demonstrating excellence including but not limited to superior  
35 scholastic achievement, leadership ability, public sector employment,  
36 and community contributions. Priority shall be given to those students

1 with the greatest loan payment to gross salary ratio. The board shall  
2 include on the planning committee, the Washington state bar  
3 association, representatives of public sector agencies, practicing  
4 attorneys, social service representatives, and law school faculty.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The board may award loan repayment funds to  
6 eligible graduates from the funds appropriated to the board for this  
7 purpose, or from any private donations, or any other funds given to the  
8 board for this program. The board shall solicit and encourage  
9 contribution of funds from legal associations, including but not  
10 limited to the Washington state bar association. The amount of the  
11 loan assistance award shall be equivalent to the amount of the eligible  
12 graduate's monthly loan payments, but in no event shall exceed five  
13 hundred dollars per month. Students are eligible to receive loan  
14 assistance for the duration of their public sector employment, not to  
15 exceed three years.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Eligible graduates shall provide quarterly  
17 proof of continued public sector employment to the higher education  
18 coordinating board at the times and in the manner established by the  
19 board in their rule-making process. If an eligible graduate fails to  
20 provide proof of public sector employment, the board shall cease  
21 distribution of the loan assistance payments and terminate the  
22 graduate's participation in the program.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Sections 1 through 6 of this act shall  
24 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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