



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

2017 Assembly Bill 567

Assembly Amendment 1

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2017 ASSEMBLY BILL 567

Assembly Bill 567 requires the Public Defender Board to establish a student loan repayment pilot program for attorneys in private practice in rural counties who accept public defender appointments. The pilot program would provide up to \$20,000 per year for eligible attorneys to use to repay student loans. In general, an eligible attorney must: (1) be licensed to practice law in Wisconsin; (2) be certified to accept state public defender appointments; (3) agree to accept a minimum of 50 state public defender appointments per year; (4) maintain a law practice that is headquartered or performs a demonstrated majority of its work in a county with a population of 25,000 or fewer residents; and (5) have outstanding student loans that were incurred to obtain a juris doctorate degree from an accredited university.

ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT 1

Assembly Amendment 1 places additional conditions on an attorney's eligibility for the pilot program by requiring that a qualifying attorney must:

- Accept 50 state public defender appointments per year in a county with a population of 25,000 or fewer residents or a population density of not more than 55 persons per square mile.
- Maintains a law practice that is either headquartered or performs a demonstrated majority of its legal work in a county with a population of 25,000 or fewer residents, or a population density of not more than 55 persons per square mile.

The amendment also requires the Public Defender Board to submit to the Legislature a report that evaluates the effectiveness of the student loan payment pilot program, recommends whether to continue the program, and if program continuation is recommended, provides

recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the program. The Public Defender Board must submit the report by September 30, 2019.

BILL HISTORY

Assembly Bill 567 was introduced on October 19, 2017, by Representative Tusler and others. On December 21, 2017, Representative Tusler offered Assembly Amendment 1. On January 18, 2018, the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities recommended adoption of Assembly Amendment 1 and passage of Assembly Bill 567, as amended, on votes of Ayes, 14; Noes, 0.

JN:ksm