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3 Elissa Silverman
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15 A BILL

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19 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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24 To establish a student loan debt forgiveness program for residents of the District.

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26 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That
27 this act may be cited as the "Student Loan Debt Forgiveness Act of 2017".
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29 Sec. 2. Definitions.

30 For the purposes of this act, the term:

31 (1) "Federal income-driven repayment plan" refers to any repayment option
32 available to federal student loan borrowers in which payments are determined based on a
33 percentage of borrowers' discretionary income, including the income-based repayment plan,
34 Revised Pay As You Earn plan, Pay As You Earn plan, and the income-contingent repayment
35 plan.

36 (2) "Income" means the total adjusted gross income of the applicant and the
37 applicant's spouse, if applicable.

38 (3) "OSSE" means the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

39 (4) "Program" means the District of Columbia Student Loan Debt Forgiveness
40 Program established pursuant to this act.

41 (5) "Student education loan" means any loan primarily obtained for personal use
42 to finance post-secondary education or other school-related expenses.

43 Sec. 3. Establishment of Student Loan Debt Forgiveness Program.

44 (a) There is established the District of Columbia Student Loan Debt Forgiveness
45 Program.

46 (b) An applicant that meets the eligibility requirements in section 5 shall be eligible to
47 receive an award equal to 100% of his or her monthly federal income-driven repayment plan
48 payments for up to 60 months of the federal repayment program.

49 (c) An award granted under this act shall be deferred for the duration of any period during
50 which the recipient has been granted a deferment or forbearance.

51 Sec. 4. Administration of the Program.

52 OSSE, in consultation with the Student Loan Ombudsman, established pursuant to
53 section 7a of the Department of Insurance and Securities Regulation Establishment Act of 1996,
54 effective February 18, 2017 (D.C. Law 21-214; D.C. Official Code § 31-106.01), shall
55 administer the Program and shall:

56 (1) Establish an application process;

57 (2) Conduct regular surveys to ensure participant compliance with the
58 Program;

59 (3) Disburse all awarded funds; and

60 (4) Perform any other functions necessary for the administration of to the
61 Program.

62 Sec. 5. Eligibility requirements.

63 (a) To be eligible for an award pursuant to this act, an applicant shall:

64 (1) Be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States;

65 (2) Have enrolled in a post-secondary institution after January 1, 2016;

66 (3) Have outstanding debt on a student education loan;

67 (4) Apply for an award under this act within two years of ceasing to be enrolled as
68 a full or half-time student at an institution of post-secondary education;

69 (5) Have his or her loans enrolled in the federal income-driven repayment plan
70 providing the lowest monthly payment amount where the monthly payment amount is tied to a
71 percentage of the participant's discretionary income;

72 (6) Have an adjusted gross income that is less than or equal to \$75,000 if
73 unmarried, or if married and filing an individual federal income tax return, or less than or equal
74 to \$95,000 if married and filing a joint federal income tax return with his or her spouse; and

75 (7) Be a resident of the District.

76 Sec. 6. Application for participation in the Program.

77 An applicant seeking to participate in the Program shall apply by submitting all of the
78 following to OSSE:

79 (1) A completed application for participation in the Program in a form and
80 manner prescribed by OSSE and signed under penalty of perjury;

81 (2) If employed, verification of employment, to include a paystub or W-2 form;

82 and

83 (3) Any other information OSSE considers necessary as prescribed by rules issued
84 pursuant to this act.

85 Sec. 7. Rulemaking.

86 The Mayor, pursuant to Title I of the District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act,
87 approved October 21, 1968 (82 Stat. 1204; D.C. Official Code § 2-501 *et seq.*), shall issue rules
88 to implement the provisions of this act within 180 days of the effective date of this act.

89 Sec. 8. Fiscal impact statement.

90 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
91 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
92 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

93 Sec. 9. Effective date.

94 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
95 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
96 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
97 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
98 Columbia Register.