

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5720

As Passed Senate, March 3, 2009

Title: An act relating to tuition waivers for stepchildren of veterans and national guard members.

Brief Description: Including stepchildren in tuition waivers for children of veterans and national guard members.

Sponsors: Senators Hewitt, Hobbs, Brandland and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/04/09 [DP].
Passed Senate: 3/03/09, 46-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kilmer, Chair; Jarrett, Vice Chair; Becker, Ranking Minority Member; Hewitt, Jacobsen, Kastama, McAuliffe, Pflug, Shin and Stevens.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Institutions must waive all tuition and fees for the children and spouses of eligible veterans or National Guard members who died or became permanently and totally disabled as a result of active service or who are missing in action or prisoners of war. "Totally disabled" means a person who has been determined to be 100 percent disabled by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. To qualify for the waiver, a child must be a Washington resident between 17 and 26 years old. A spouse must also be a Washington resident and may not have remarried. With respect to a spouse, there is a ten-year limitation which runs from the date of the veteran's death, disability, or federal determination of POW/MIA status.

Waiver recipients may attend part-time or full-time. Total credits earned pursuant to the waiver may not exceed 200 quarter credits or the equivalent of semester credits. Tuition waivers for graduate students are not required but are encouraged.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: The term "child" is defined as a biological child, adopted child, or stepchild.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is the second time the Legislature has needed to clarify language in this law. This will help the Attorney General's office interpret the statute as the Legislature intended.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Hewitt, prime sponsor.