

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1739

As Reported by House Committee On: Higher Education

Title: An act relating to setting guidelines for the percentages of resident, nonresident, and foreign students at four-year institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Requiring guidelines for the percentage of resident, nonresident, and foreign students at institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Representatives Haler, Seaquist and Pollet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/12/13, 2/20/13 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the boards of trustees or regents at the public baccalaureates to set guidelines for the percentages of resident, nonresident, and foreign students enrolled at each institution.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fagan, Hansen, Hargrove, Johnson, Magendanz, Pedersen, Riccelli, Scott, Sells, Smith and Tarleton.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Reykdal, Sawyer and Walsh.

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

Statute defines resident and nonresident students for tuition purposes. There are currently 13 specific categories that allow an individual to receive resident tuition. Many of these

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categories require establishing domicile in Washington and remaining in the state for some time after establishing domicile. There is also a definition of nonresident student that specifically excludes certain people from receiving resident tuition in Washington State. Foreign students are generally considered nonresidents and pay nonresident tuition rates.

Resident tuition rates are generally much lower than nonresident tuition rates. For example, at the University of Washington, an international or nonresident student pays \$29,938 for nine months of tuition and fees, and a resident student pays \$12,383. At Washington State University during the current school year, undergraduate tuition for residents is \$11,386, and foreigners or nonresidents pay \$24,468.

House Bill 1795, which passed in 2011, included language that requires the University of Washington to enroll at least the same number of resident undergraduate freshman at the Seattle campus as enrolled during the 2009-10 academic year.

Summary of Bill:

The boards of regents or trustees at the University of Washington, Washington State University, Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, Western Washington University, and The Evergreen State College must each set guidelines for the percentages of resident, nonresident, and foreign students enrolled at each institution. The guidelines must be annually established by formal vote at regular meetings.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It appears the universities favor foreign and nonresident students over resident students. That is the appearance. The Legislature needs to know the criteria for accepting resident students. This bill would shed light on who is accepted to our public universities and why. There have been several cases of 4.0 students not being accepted at the University of Washington. This issue makes it to the headlines of the paper every so often. The board of trustees at The Evergreen State College do actually take a vote to adjust the balance of resident and nonresident students. The idea is to ask the universities to make explicit their criteria for balancing in state, out of state, and foreign students without any outside guidance from the Legislature. This is a choice about balancing a student body and budget.

(In support with concerns) When discussing this issue, it is important to think about numbers versus percentages; 87.2 percent of the undergraduate students at Washington's public

baccalaureates are residents. That percentage is much higher than most other states. In Arizona, that number is more like 65 percent resident, 35 percent nonresident. The public baccalaureates are committed to serving Washington's residents. This committee heard about raising the numbers of nonresidents, but not percentages. The public baccalaureates maintained the same percentage over the last couple of years. There is a holistic review process for determining the percentages of different students accepted to the universities. It is easier for resident students to get in than nonresident students. This process is embedded in budget assumptions that go before the board of regents or trustees, but the institutions are open to providing increased transparency around the process.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Haler, prime sponsor.

(In support with concerns) Paul Francis, Council of Presidents.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.