

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1587

As Passed House
March 9, 1993

Title: An act relating to higher education.

Brief Description: Helping single parents obtain a higher education.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Ogden, Wood, J. Kohl, Jacobsen, Forner, Quall, Ludwig, Pruitt, Jones, Basich, King, Johanson, Thibaudeau, R. Meyers, Kessler, Bray, Dorn, Karahalios, Roland, Eide, Sheldon, Kremen, Finkbeiner, Veloria, Morris, Hansen, Leonard, Van Luven, H. Myers and L. Johnson.)

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, February 26, 1993, DPS;
Passed House, March 9, 1993, 98-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Jacobsen, Chair; Quall, Vice Chair; Brumsickle, Ranking Minority Member; Sheahan, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Bray; Carlson; Casada; Finkbeiner; Flemming; Kessler; J. Kohl; Mielke; Ogden; Orr; Rayburn; Shin; and Wood.

Staff: Susan Hosch (786-7120).

Background: According to a study commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation, single parent college students have a variety of financial and other needs. These include money for tuition, books, basic living expenses, basic health care, safe and affordable child care, and housing.

Washington provides financial assistance to needy students, including single parents, through a variety of programs. These programs attempt to cover each student's educational costs, but are normally based on the needs profile of an average student. If a financial aid package is not sufficient to cover a student's financial needs, the student must request additional funds from the institution's

financial aid office. Often, the office does not have enough money to cover those extra expenses, so the student must accept a loan, find additional work, or manage without additional funds.

At most colleges and universities, a basic financial aid award may include a minimal grant for child care. Since the fall of 1990, the state Need Grant Program has provided a child care grant of \$400 per year for full-time students and \$200 per year for part-time students. The federal Pell Grant also provides some child care assistance. However, financial aid administrators report that these amounts, while helpful, will cover about one-half the child care costs needed for one child during an academic year. These two financial aid programs are the only programs that recognize the costs associated with child care.

Summary of Bill: When determining financial aid awards from the 2.5 percent long-term loan fund, institutions of higher education will give second priority to needy single parents. The awards are intended to assist single parents with their educational expenses, including expenses associated with child care and transportation.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Single parents face many unique barriers when they attempt to obtain a postsecondary education. By helping them to complete a college or university education, society is making a wise investment. The reason: research has shown that education is the key to escaping poverty. And, when single parents are enrolled in school, they are providing exemplary role models for their children.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (In favor): Ann Simons, Washington Women United; and Virginia Deforest, American Association of University of Women.