

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6229

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to the Washington state scholars programs.

Brief Description: Changing residency provisions in the Washington state scholars program.

Sponsors: Senators Spanel, Prince, Bauer, Drew, West, Quigley, Wojahn, Sheldon, M. Rasmussen and Winsley.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, February 18, 1994, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Jacobsen, Chair; Quall, Vice Chair; Brumsickle, Ranking Minority Member; Sheahan, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Bray; Carlson; Casada; Finkbeiner; Flemming; Mastin; Ogden; Rayburn; Shin and Wood.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: The Washington Scholars Program was created by the 1981 Legislature. The program is administered by the Higher Education Coordination Board in cooperation with the Washington Association of Secondary School Principals. The program recognizes three high school seniors from each legislative district for outstanding academic achievements, leadership abilities and community service. In 1994, 568 students were nominated, representing 271 high schools.

In 1987 the statute was amended to authorize a four-year tuition and fee waiver for scholars attending an undergraduate program at Washington public two-year and four-year institutions. The waiver is mandatory for awards received prior to June 30, 1994 and becomes permissive for those scholars who receive their awards after June 30, 1994. In 1988 the Legislature added a grant program for scholars attending independent Washington schools. The grant may not exceed the yearly, full-time resident, undergraduate tuition and fees charged at state-funded research universities and must be matched by the school with institutional funds.

The current statute requires selection of students from high schools within each legislative district. The statute does not require consideration of the students' actual home address. Consequently, more than three students have received awards in some legislative districts while students in a neighboring legislative district have received none.

Summary of Bill: The Washington Scholars Program will honor three graduating seniors residing in each legislative district. The scholars must demonstrate academic potential, leadership ability and community service.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Currently, scholars are selected from high schools without consideration of the students' residence. This resulted in some legislative districts receiving more than three scholars while other districts received none. The Washington Scholars Program is an outstanding way to recognize Washington students.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Senator Spanel, prime sponsor (pro); and Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals (supportive of program).