

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Representative Don Carlson, Chair

BILL ANALYSIS
HB 1520

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: Exempting career federal civil service employees and their families from the nonresident tuition fees differential.

BACKGROUND: Under current law, nonresident students pay significantly higher tuition rates than those paid by resident students. With some exceptions, before a person is entitled to pay resident tuition rates, the student or the student's parents or guardian must have established and maintained a permanent home or "domicile" in the state for at least one year before the student enrolls in college. This permanent home must have been established for purposes other than paying resident tuition rates. In order to show an institution that a person has established a permanent home in Washington, he or she may have to present evidence to the institution. That evidence may include a Washington driver's license, voter registration card, rent receipts, car license, employment information, location of a checking account, and the like.

Under residency laws, a distinction is made between persons who are financially independent and those who are still dependent on their parents for financial support. With some exceptions, a dependent student's status is based on the residency status of the student's parents or legal guardian. The resident status of a financially independent student is based on the student's own circumstances.

One exception to the domicile requirements was adopted in 1993. The exception granted resident student status to the spouse and dependents of active duty military personnel stationed in Washington. These residents do not need to live in the state for a year or prove that Washington is their permanent home. With some exceptions, if a Washington resident moves out of state, he or she loses the right to pay resident tuition rates.

Institutions of higher education have the option of waiving all or a portion of the nonresident tuition differential for various types of nonresident students. These include teaching assistants, research assistants, and institutional employees working half-time or more; active-duty military personnel stationed in the state; certain types of immigrant refugees and their spouses and dependents; domestic exchange students; and the dependents of Washington's congressional delegates. Institutions may also waive the nonresident tuition differential for reciprocity students and a limited number of international students attending community colleges.

SUMMARY: The public baccalaureate institutions and the community colleges may waive the nonresident tuition differential for any career federal civil service employee who is assigned to a duty station in Washington, and the spouse and dependent children of the employee.

*Prepared for the House Higher Education Committee
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