

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Representative Don Carlson, Chair

BILL ANALYSIS
HB 2030

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: Facilitating student participation in out-of-state distance learning programs.

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.

There are two categories of resident students who are not required to meet the domicile requirements. The spouse and dependents of active-duty military personnel stationed in the state are considered to be resident students. In addition, members of 33 American- Indian tribes are also defined as resident students if the tribal members were domiciled in Oregon, Idaho, or Montana for at least one year immediately before enrolling in a Washington college or university. Students in the American Indian residency category are not included in official enrollment reports, and colleges and universities do not receive any state funding for their education.

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 students participating in regional education programs through the WAMI and WICHE compacts, and students from Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia who are participating in reciprocity programs.

Washington's colleges and universities are beginning to use distance learning technologies to educate students in diverse locations. Some institutions of higher education are members of distance learning consortias such as the Western Governor's University and the National Universities Degree consortium. The state's residency and tuition laws do not specifically address the special circumstances created by programs offered through distance learning technologies.

SUMMARY: For the purpose of paying resident tuition rates, certain nonresident students enrolled in distance learning programs will be defined as resident students. Resident students include students enrolled in academic programs offered through distance learning technologies by a consortium of institutions of higher education. One condition applies: in order to qualify for

resident tuition rates, students must be enrolled in an out-of-state institution that permits Washington students to pay resident tuition rates in distance learning programs.