

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 1622

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, March 31, 1997

Title: An act relating to the Hispanic American endowed scholarship program.

Brief Description: Establishing the Hispanic American endowed scholarship program.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Kenney, Carlson, Mason, Van Luven, Sheahan, Radcliff, Butler, Regala, Sullivan, Cody, Wood, Veloria, Tokuda, Kastama, Cooper, Skinner, Dunshee, Constantine, Dickerson, Conway, Anderson, Costa, Schoesler and O'Brien).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/27/97, 3/31/97 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Wood, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Bauer, Hale, Kohl, Patterson, Prince and Sheldon.

Staff: Jennifer Hanlon (786-7784)

Background: According to population statistics, Hispanic Americans comprise approximately 6.1 percent of Washington's population. They are enrolled in higher education at a rate of 4 percent. Hispanic American students participate in greater numbers in lower division courses than in upper division courses. They are also represented in greater numbers in community colleges than in four-year institutions.

A recent study on the status of minority students and faculty in Washington's higher education system indicates a low graduation rate among Hispanic American students. While, on the average, Hispanic American students enroll at approximately 4 percent of the total student enrollment, they are conferred 2.7 percent of all bachelor's degrees awarded at four-year institutions.

In 1990, the Legislature created the American Indian Endowed Scholarship Program. The scholarships are funded through the earnings on an endowment created when \$50,000 in private donations are matched with an equal amount of state funds.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Hispanic American Endowed Scholarship Program is established. The Higher Education Coordinating Board is responsible for administering the program. Its powers and duties are described to include, but not be limited to, establishing both an advisory and a screening committee; selecting scholarship recipients; and accepting grants and donations from public and private sources for the program.

Eligibility is described to include a student familiar with the educational and cultural needs of the Hispanic community, who is financially needy, a full-time resident student at an institution of higher education in this state, and who promises to use his or her education to benefit Hispanic Americans.

The board and advisory committee must develop criteria for selecting scholarship recipients. The criteria must assess the student's social and cultural ties to an Hispanic American community within the state. The criteria must include a priority for upper division or graduate students. It may also include a priority for students majoring in a program in which expertise is needed by the state's Hispanic Americans.

The endowment and trust funds are established. Upon raising private donations, the board may request matching money to be deposited into the endowment fund.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The Hispanic American community is the primary fund-raiser. Technical changes are made to the bill.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This bill provides scholarships for students who might not otherwise meet their financial goals. The program also creates a partnership between the community and the state. Many students drop out of college because they do not believe the financial resources exist to finish their education. People with education return to the Hispanic community and give something back to the community. This legislation improves the level of education and the quality of life in the Hispanic American community.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Kenney, prime sponsor; Alexandra Narraez, high school student; Lolo Arevalo, Adelante; Daniel Romero, University of Washington student; Edith Rubles, Whitman College student; Susan Patrick, HECB.