
HOUSE BILL 1372

State of Washington

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By Representatives Carlson, Mason, Radcliff, O'Brien, Dunn, Kenney, Sheahan, Talcott, Hatfield, Schoesler, Mitchell, Costa, Cooper, Dickerson, Keiser, Wood and Kessler

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1 AN ACT Relating to the Washington advanced college tuition payment
2 program; amending RCW 43.79A.040; and adding a new chapter to Title 28B
3 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The Washington advanced college tuition
6 payment program is established to help make higher education affordable
7 and accessible to all citizens of the state of Washington by offering
8 a savings incentive that will protect purchasers and beneficiaries
9 against rising tuition costs. The program is designed to encourage
10 savings and enhance the ability of Washington citizens to obtain
11 financial access to institutions of higher education. In addition, the
12 program encourages elementary and secondary school students to do well
13 in school as a means of preparing for and aspiring to higher education
14 attendance. This program is intended to promote a well-educated and
15 financially secure population to the ultimate benefit of all citizens
16 of the state of Washington.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
18 throughout this chapter, unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

- 1 (1) "Academic year" means the regular nine-month, three-quarter, or
2 two-semester period annually occurring between July 1st and June 30th.
- 3 (2) "Account" means the Washington advanced college tuition payment
4 program account established for the deposit of all money received by
5 the board from eligible purchasers and interest earnings on investments
6 of funds in the account, as well as for all expenditures on behalf of
7 eligible beneficiaries for the redemption of tuition units.
- 8 (3) "Board" means the higher education coordinating board as
9 defined in chapter 28B.80 RCW.
- 10 (4) "Eligible beneficiary" means the person for whom the tuition
11 unit will be redeemed for attendance at an institution of higher
12 education. The beneficiary is that person named by the purchaser at
13 the time that a tuition unit contract is accepted by the board. With
14 the exception of tuition unit contracts purchased by qualified
15 organizations as future scholarships, the beneficiary must reside in
16 the state of Washington or otherwise be a resident of the state of
17 Washington at the time the tuition unit contract is accepted by the
18 board.
- 19 (5) "Eligible purchaser" means an individual or organization that
20 has entered into a tuition unit contract with the board for the
21 purchase of tuition units for an eligible beneficiary.
- 22 (6) "Full-time tuition charges" means resident tuition charges at
23 a state institution of higher education for enrollments between ten
24 credits and eighteen credit hours per academic term.
- 25 (7) "Institution of higher education" means an institution that
26 offers education beyond the secondary level and is accredited by a
27 nationally recognized accrediting association or is licensed to do
28 business in the state in which it is located.
- 29 (8) "Investment board" means the state investment board as defined
30 in chapter 43.33A RCW.
- 31 (9) "State institution of higher education" means institutions of
32 higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.
- 33 (10) "Tuition and fees" means tuition and services and activities
34 fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020 and 28B.15.041 rounded to the nearest
35 whole dollar. The maximum tuition and fees charges recognized for
36 beneficiaries enrolled in a state technical college shall be equal to
37 the tuition and fees for the community college system.
- 38 (11) "Tuition unit contract" means a contract between an eligible
39 purchaser and the board, or a successor agency appointed for

1 administration of this chapter, for the purchase of tuition units for
2 a specified beneficiary that may be redeemed at a later date for an
3 equal number of tuition units.

4 (12) "Unit purchase price" means the minimum cost to purchase one
5 tuition unit for an eligible beneficiary. Generally, the minimum
6 purchase price is one percent of the weighted average tuition and fees
7 for the current year, rounded to the nearest whole dollar, adjusted for
8 the costs of administration and adjusted to ensure the actuarial
9 soundness of the account.

10 (13) "Weighted average tuition" shall be calculated as the sum of
11 the undergraduate tuition and services and activities fees for each
12 four-year state institution of higher education, multiplied by the
13 respective full-time equivalent student enrollment at each institution
14 divided by the sum total of undergraduate full-time equivalent student
15 enrollments of all four-year state institutions of higher education,
16 rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

17 (14) "Weighted average tuition unit" is the value of the weighted
18 average tuition and fees divided by one hundred. The weighted average
19 is the basis upon which tuition benefits are calculated for graduate
20 program enrollments and for attendance at nonstate institutions of
21 higher education and is the basis for any refunds provided from the
22 program.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The Washington advanced college tuition
24 payment program shall be administered by the board.

25 (2) The board shall review its administration of the program and
26 make a recommendation to the legislature by the end of the second year
27 after the effective date of this section as to whether continued
28 responsibility for the program should reside with the board or be
29 assigned to another state agency or state entity.

30 (3)(a) The Washington advanced college tuition payment program
31 shall consist of the sale of tuition units, which may be redeemed by
32 the beneficiary at a future date for an equal number of tuition units
33 regardless of any increase in the price of tuition, that may have
34 occurred in the interval.

35 (b) Each purchase shall be worth a specific number of or fraction
36 of tuition units at each state institution of higher education as
37 determined by the board.

1 (c) The number of tuition units necessary to pay for a full year's,
2 full-time tuition and fee charges at a state institution of higher
3 education shall be set by the board at the time a purchaser enters into
4 a tuition unit contract.

5 (d) The board may limit the number of tuition units purchased by
6 any one purchaser or on behalf of any one beneficiary, however, no
7 limit may be imposed that is less than that necessary to achieve four
8 years of full-time, undergraduate tuition charges at a state
9 institution of higher education. The board also may, at its
10 discretion, limit the number of participants, if needed, to ensure the
11 actuarial soundness and integrity of the program.

12 (4)(a) No tuition unit may be redeemed until two years after the
13 purchase of the unit. Units may be redeemed for enrollment at any
14 institution of higher education.

15 (b) Units redeemed at a nonstate institution of higher education or
16 for graduate enrollment shall be redeemed at the current weighted
17 average tuition unit in effect at the time of redemption.

18 (5) The board shall determine the conditions under which the
19 tuition benefit may be transferred to another family member. In
20 permitting such transfers, the board may not allow the tuition benefit
21 to be bought, sold, bartered, or otherwise exchanged for goods and
22 services by either the beneficiary or the purchaser.

23 (6) The board shall administer the Washington advanced college
24 tuition payment program in a manner reasonably designed to be
25 actuarially sound, such that the assets of the trust will be sufficient
26 to defray the obligations of the trust including the costs of
27 administration. The board may, at its discretion, discount the minimum
28 purchase price for certain kinds of purchases such as those from
29 families with young children, as long as the actuarial soundness of the
30 account is not jeopardized.

31 (7) The board shall annually determine current value of a tuition
32 unit and the value of the weighted average tuition unit.

33 (8) The board shall promote, advertise, and publicize the
34 Washington advanced college tuition payment program.

35 (9) In addition to any other powers conferred by this chapter, the
36 board may:

37 (a) Impose reasonable limits on the number of tuition units or
38 units that may be used in any one year;

- 1 (b) Determine and set any time limits, if necessary, for the use of
2 benefits under this chapter;
- 3 (c) Impose and collect administrative fees and charges in
4 connection with any transaction under this chapter;
- 5 (d) Appoint and use advisory committees as needed to provide
6 program direction and guidance;
- 7 (e) Formulate and adopt all other policies and rules necessary for
8 the efficient administration of the program;
- 9 (f) Consider the addition of an advanced payment program for room
10 and board contracts and also consider a college savings program;
- 11 (g) Purchase insurance from insurers licensed to do business in the
12 state, to provide for coverage against any loss in connection with the
13 account's property, assets, or activities or to further insure the
14 value of the tuition units;
- 15 (h) Make, execute, and deliver contracts, conveyances, and other
16 instruments necessary to the exercise and discharge of its powers and
17 duties under this chapter;
- 18 (i) Contract for the provision for all or part of the services
19 necessary for the management and operation of the program with other
20 state or nonstate entities authorized to do business in the state;
- 21 (j) Contract for other services or for goods needed by the board in
22 the conduct of its business under this chapter;
- 23 (k) Employ all personnel as necessary to carry out its
24 responsibilities under this chapter and to fix the compensation of
25 these persons;
- 26 (l) Contract with financial consultants, actuaries, auditors, and
27 other consultants as necessary to carry out its responsibilities under
28 this chapter;
- 29 (m) Solicit and accept cash donations and grants from any person,
30 governmental agency, private business, or organization; and
- 31 (n) Perform all acts necessary and proper to carry out the duties
32 and responsibilities of this program under this chapter.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The board may, at its discretion, allow an
34 organization to purchase tuition units for future use as scholarships.
35 Such organizations electing to purchase tuition units for this purpose
36 must enter into a contract with the board which, at a minimum, ensures
37 that the scholarship shall be freely given by the purchaser to a
38 scholarship recipient. For such purchases, the purchaser need not name

1 a beneficiary until four months before the date when the tuition units
2 are first expected to be used.

3 The board shall formulate and adopt such rules as are necessary to
4 determine which organizations may qualify to purchase tuition units for
5 scholarships under this section. The board also may consider
6 additional rules for the use of tuition units if purchased as
7 scholarships.

8 The board may establish its own scholarship fund under this
9 chapter. Scholarships issued by the board under this section shall be
10 given to students who demonstrate financial need. Financial need is
11 not a criterion that any other organization need consider when using
12 tuition units as scholarships.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The Washington advanced college tuition
14 payment program is an essential state governmental function. The
15 board's contracts with eligible participants shall be legally binding
16 on the state as set forth in this chapter. If, and only if, the moneys
17 in the account are projected to be insufficient to cover the state's
18 contracted expenses for a given biennium, then the legislature shall
19 appropriate to the account the amount necessary to cover such expenses.

20 The tuition and fees charged by a state institution of higher
21 education to an eligible beneficiary for a current enrollment shall be
22 paid by the account to the extent the beneficiary has remaining unused
23 tuition units for the appropriate school. The tuition and fees charged
24 to a beneficiary for graduate level enrollments or by a nonstate
25 institution of higher education shall be paid by the account to the
26 extent that the beneficiary has remaining weighted average tuition
27 units.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) The Washington advanced college tuition
29 payment program account is created in the custody of the state
30 treasurer. The account shall be a discrete nontreasury account
31 retaining its interest earnings in accordance with RCW 43.79A.040.

32 (2) The board shall deposit in the account all money received for
33 the program. The account shall be self-sustaining and consist of
34 payments received from purchasers of tuition units and funds received
35 from other sources, public or private. With the exception of
36 investment and operating costs associated with the investment of money
37 by the investment board paid under RCW 43.33A.160 and 43.84.160, the

1 account shall be credited with all investment income earned by the
2 account. Disbursements from the account are exempt from appropriations
3 and the allotment provisions of chapter 43.88 RCW. Money used for
4 program administration is subject to the allotment and budgetary
5 controls of chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for
6 expenditures.

7 (3) The assets of the account may be spent for the purpose of
8 making payments to institutions of higher education on behalf of the
9 qualified beneficiaries, making refunds, transfers, or direct payments
10 upon the termination of the Washington advanced college tuition payment
11 program, and paying the costs of administration of the program.
12 Disbursements from the account shall be made only on the authorization
13 of the board.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) The investment board has the full power
15 to invest, reinvest, manage, contract, sell, or exchange investment
16 money in the account. All investment and operating costs associated
17 with the investment of money shall be paid pursuant to RCW 43.33A.160
18 and 43.84.160. With the exception of these expenses, the earnings from
19 the investment of the money shall be retained by the account.

20 (2) All investments made by the investment board shall be made with
21 the exercise of that degree of judgment and care pursuant to RCW
22 43.33A.140 and the investment policy established by the state
23 investment board.

24 (3) As deemed appropriate by the investment board, money in the
25 account may be commingled for investment with other funds subject to
26 investment by the board.

27 (4) The authority to establish all policies relating to the
28 account, other than the investment policies as set forth in subsections
29 (1) through (3) of this section, resides with the board. With the
30 exception of expenses of the investment board set forth in subsection
31 (1) of this section, disbursements from the account shall be made only
32 on the authorization of the board, and money in the account may be
33 spent only for the purposes of the program as specified in this
34 chapter.

35 (5) The investment board shall routinely consult and communicate
36 with the board on the investment policy, earnings of the trust, and
37 related needs of the program.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The board shall annually evaluate, and cause
2 to be evaluated by a nationally recognized actuary, the soundness of
3 the account and determine the additional assets needed, if any, to
4 defray the obligations of the account.

5 If funds are not sufficient to ensure the actuarial soundness of
6 the account, the board shall adjust the price of subsequent tuition
7 credit purchases to ensure its soundness.

8 If there are insufficient numbers of new purchases to ensure the
9 actuarial soundness of the account, the board shall request such funds
10 from the legislature as are required to ensure the integrity of the
11 program. Funds may be appropriated directly to the account or
12 appropriated under the condition that they be repaid at a later date.
13 The repayment shall be made at such time that the account is again
14 determined to be actuarially sound.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** (1) In the event that the state determines
16 that the program is not financially feasible, or for any other reason,
17 the state may declare the discontinuance of the program. At the time
18 of such declaration, the board will cease to accept any further tuition
19 unit contracts or purchases.

20 (2) The remaining tuition units for all beneficiaries who have
21 either enrolled in higher education or who are within four years of
22 graduation from a secondary school shall be honored until such tuition
23 units have been exhausted, or for ten fiscal years from the date that
24 the program has been discontinued, whichever comes first. All other
25 contract holders shall receive a refund equal to the value of the
26 current weighted average tuition units in effect at the time that the
27 program was declared discontinued.

28 (3) At the end of the ten-year period, any tuition units remaining
29 unused by currently active beneficiaries enrolled in higher education
30 shall be refunded at the value of the current weighted average tuition
31 unit in effect at the end of that ten-year period.

32 (4) At the end of the ten-year period, all other funds remaining in
33 the account not needed to make refunds or to pay for administrative
34 costs shall be deposited to the state general fund.

35 (5) The board may make refunds under other exceptional
36 circumstances as it deems fit, however, no tuition units may be honored
37 after the end of the tenth fiscal year following the declaration of
38 discontinuance of the program.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** (1) The board, in planning and devising the
2 program, shall consult with the investment board, the state treasurer,
3 the state actuary, the office of financial management, and the
4 institutions of higher education.

5 (2) The board may seek the assistance of the state agencies named
6 in subsection (1) of this section, private financial institutions, and
7 any other qualified party with experience in the areas of accounting,
8 actuary, risk management, or investment management to assist with
9 preparing an accounting of the program and ensuring the fiscal
10 soundness of the account.

11 (3) State agencies and public institutions of higher education
12 shall fully cooperate with the board in matters relating to the program
13 in order to ensure the solvency of the account and ability of the board
14 to meet outstanding commitments.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** This chapter shall not be construed as a
16 promise that any beneficiary shall be granted admission to any
17 institution of higher education, will earn any specific or minimum
18 number of academic credits, or will graduate from any such institution.
19 In addition, this chapter shall not be construed as a promise of either
20 course or program availability.

21 Participation in this program does not guarantee an eligible
22 beneficiary the right to resident tuition and fees. To qualify for
23 resident and respective tuition subsidies, the eligible beneficiary
24 must meet the applicable provisions of RCW 28B.15.011 through
25 28B.15.015.

26 This chapter shall not be construed to imply that the redemption of
27 tuition units shall be equal to any value greater than the
28 undergraduate tuition and services and activities fees at a state
29 institution of higher education as computed under this chapter.
30 Eligible beneficiaries will be responsible for payment of any other fee
31 that does not qualify as a services and activities fee including, but
32 not limited to, any expenses for tuition surcharges, tuition overload
33 fees, laboratory fees, equipment fees, book fees, rental fees, room and
34 board charges, or fines.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** (1) The intent of the Washington advanced
36 college tuition payment program is to redeem tuition units for

1 attendance at an institution of higher education. Refunds shall be
2 issued under specific conditions that may include the following:

3 (a) Certification that the beneficiary, who is eighteen years of
4 age or older, will not attend an institution of higher education, will
5 result in a refund not to exceed ninety-five percent of the current
6 weighted average tuition and fees in effect at the time of such
7 certification. No more than one hundred tuition units may be refunded
8 per year to any individual making this certification. The refund shall
9 be made no sooner than ninety days after such certification, less any
10 administrative processing fees assessed by the board. The board may,
11 at its discretion, impose a greater penalty;

12 (b) If there is certification of the death or disability of the
13 beneficiary, the refund shall be equal to one hundred percent of any
14 remaining unused tuition units valued at the current weighted average
15 tuition units at the time that such certification is submitted to the
16 board, less any administrative processing fees assessed by the board;

17 (c) If there is certification by the student of graduation or
18 program completion, the refund may be as great as one hundred percent
19 of any remaining unused weighted average tuition units at the time that
20 such certification is submitted to the board, less any administrative
21 processing fees assessed by the board. The board may, at its
22 discretion, impose a penalty if needed to comply with federal tax
23 rules;

24 (d) Certification of other tuition and fee scholarships, which will
25 cover the cost of tuition for the eligible beneficiary. The refund
26 shall be equal to one hundred percent of the current weighted average
27 tuition units in effect at the time of the refund request, plus any
28 administrative processing fees assessed by the board. The refund under
29 this subsection may not exceed the value of the scholarship;

30 (e) Incorrect or misleading information provided by the purchaser
31 or beneficiaries may result in a refund of the purchaser's investment,
32 less any administrative processing fees assessed by the board. The
33 value of the refund will not exceed the actual dollar value of the
34 purchaser's contributions; and

35 (f) The board may determine other circumstances qualifying for
36 refunds of remaining unused tuition units and may determine the value
37 of that refund.

1 (2) With the exception of subsection (1)(b) and (e) of this section
2 no refunds may be made before the beneficiary is at least eighteen
3 years of age.

4 **Sec. 13.** RCW 43.79A.040 and 1996 c 253 s 409 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) Money in the treasurer's trust fund may be deposited, invested
7 and reinvested by the state treasurer in accordance with RCW 43.84.080
8 in the same manner and to the same extent as if the money were in the
9 state treasury.

10 (2) All income received from investment of the treasurer's trust
11 fund shall be set aside in an account in the treasury trust fund to be
12 known as the investment income account.

13 (3) The investment income account may be utilized for the payment
14 of purchased banking services on behalf of treasurer's trust funds
15 including, but not limited to, depository, safekeeping, and
16 disbursement functions for the state treasurer or affected state
17 agencies. The investment income account is subject in all respects to
18 chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for payments to
19 financial institutions. Payments shall occur prior to distribution of
20 earnings set forth in subsection (4) of this section.

21 (4)(a) Monthly, the state treasurer shall distribute the earnings
22 credited to the investment income account to the state general fund
23 except under (b) and (c) of this subsection.

24 (b) The following accounts and funds shall receive their
25 proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's or fund's
26 average daily balance for the period: The Washington advanced college
27 tuition payment program account, the agricultural local fund, the
28 American Indian scholarship endowment fund, the Washington
29 international exchange scholarship endowment fund, the energy account,
30 the fair fund, the game farm alternative account, the grain inspection
31 revolving fund, the rural rehabilitation account, and the self-
32 insurance revolving fund. However, the earnings to be distributed
33 shall first be reduced by the allocation to the state treasurer's
34 service fund pursuant to RCW 43.08.190.

35 (c) The following accounts and funds shall receive eighty percent
36 of their proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's or
37 fund's average daily balance for the period: The advanced right of way
38 revolving fund, the federal narcotics asset forfeitures account, the

1 high occupancy vehicle account, and the local rail service assistance
2 account.

3 (5) In conformance with Article II, section 37 of the state
4 Constitution, no trust accounts or funds shall be allocated earnings
5 without the specific affirmative directive of this section.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** Sections 1 through 12 of this act
7 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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