

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Rep. Phyllis Kenney, Democratic Co-Chair and
Rep. Don Carlson, Republican Co-Chair

BILL ANALYSIS
HB 1587

Brief Description: Authorizing Washington scholars to receive awards for graduate and professional school.

Background: The Washington Scholars program was established by the 1981 Legislature. The program purposes include: recognizing and honoring the accomplishments of three high school seniors from each legislative district; encouraging and facilitating privately-funded scholarship awards; and stimulating recruitment of outstanding students to Washington public and independent colleges and universities. High school principals nominate the top one percent of the graduating senior class based upon academic accomplishments, leadership, and community service.

Scholars may receive a grant for undergraduate study at Washington public or independent colleges and universities. Renewal each year is contingent upon maintaining a 3.30 GPA. The state grant for scholars attending independent schools is contingent upon the institution's agreement to match the award with either money or a tuition waiver. The maximum yearly grant amount is limited to the full-time, resident, undergraduate tuition and fees at the University of Washington. In 1998-99 the maximum grant amount is \$3,396.

The total appropriation for the Washington Scholars program for the 1997-99 biennium is \$2,276,000. This appropriation level reflects a usage pattern of about 65 percent, meaning that typically about 65 percent of Washington scholars choose to enroll in Washington schools and use their scholarships.

Summary: The Washington Scholars program is modified to provide grants for graduate and professional studies. The grants are competitively awarded. All students who have received a Washington scholars award in one of the previous six years are eligible to compete for the graduate and professional studies grants. The Higher Education Coordinating Board is made responsible for distributing the grants annually to the extent that funds are made available. The individual yearly grant amount is limited to the full-time resident, graduate student tuition and fees in effect at the University of Washington. Grants to recipients attending an independent institution shall be contingent upon the institution matching the grant amount with either money or a tuition waiver.

Prepared for the House Higher Education Committee
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