

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1016

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, March 24, 1999

Title: An act relating to a pilot project on resident tuition rates for students residing in certain border counties.

Brief Description: Creating the border county higher education opportunity pilot project.

Sponsors: House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Carlson, Ogden, Kenney, Boldt, Pennington, Dunn, Hatfield, Doumit, Mielke, Talcott and Lantz).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/22/99, 3/24/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kohl-Welles, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Bauer, Horn, McAuliffe, Sheahan and B. Sheldon.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: With some exceptions, students who move to Washington or commute from a border state in order to attend a public college or university, are charged a much higher tuition rate than Washington residents.

The definitions for resident and nonresident students are determined by law. Resident students who are dependents must be able to prove that their parents or guardians have been domiciled in the state for at least one year before the students enroll in college. Independent students must meet the same test themselves.

The state of Oregon has recently made tuition policy changes that affect students living in the border counties of Washington. Nonresident students may enroll at Portland State University for eight credits or less and pay the same tuition as Oregon residents. Community colleges in Oregon set their own tuition rates. There are three community colleges in the bordering Oregon counties of Multnomah, Clatsop and Columbia: Portland Community College in Portland, Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, and Clatsop Community College in Astoria. Portland Community College and Clatsop Community College charge both residents and nonresidents the same tuition. Mt. Hood Community College charges an additional \$10 per credit for nonresidents.

The four Washington counties that border the three Oregon counties of Multnomah, Clatsop and Columbia are Clark, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, and Pacific counties. There are three

Washington community colleges that offer programs in these counties: Clark College in Vancouver, Lower Columbia College in Longview, and Grays Harbor College extension programs in Pacific County. Washington State University Vancouver, located in Clark County, offers upper division baccalaureate and graduate degree programs.

Summary of Bill: The border county higher education opportunity pilot project is created. Under the pilot project, residents of Oregon, who have resided in Columbia, Multnomah, Clatsop or Washington counties for at least 90 days, are eligible to pay resident tuition rates if they enroll in community college programs located in the Washington counties of Clark, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, or Pacific. Residents of the four Oregon counties that enroll in courses at the Vancouver branch of Washington State University for eight credits or less may do so at the resident tuition rates. Participating Washington institutions are required to give priority program enrollment to Washington residents.

The pilot project is administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). By November 30, 2001, the board must report to the Governor and the Legislature on the results of the pilot project and make recommendations on the extent to which border county tuition policies should be revised or expanded. For each participating institution, the HECB is required to analyze, by program, the impact of the pilot project on: enrollment levels, distribution of students by residency, and enrollment capacity.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This is similar to last year's bill. It recognizes southwest Washington has a unique relationship with Oregon colleges and universities. Students move back and forth across the Columbia River with great fluidity. Vancouver-WSU will benefit greatly from this kind of reciprocal agreement and an expansion of the pilot may be appropriate in a couple of years. The melding of faculty with PSU provides programs that benefit both states.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Representative Don Carlson, prime sponsor; Rhonda Coats, SBCTC.