

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5330

C 117 L 00

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Treating active duty military personnel as residents for purposes of higher education tuition.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Brown, Goings, Franklin, Patterson, Eide, B. Sheldon, Winsley, Costa, Oke, Bauer and Rasmussen).

Senate Committee on Higher Education

House Committee on Higher Education

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: The level of tuition required of active duty military personnel, their spouses, and their dependents has been debated in the Legislature a number of times. In 1971, the statutes defining resident and nonresident students were consolidated; the nonresident differential was waived for active duty military and other groups. In the early 1980s, the tuition waiver programs were reviewed to determine whether or not to continue those not based on financial need. In 1982, the waiver of the nonresident fee differential was repealed for the military as a means of generating additional general fund revenue. Projected revenue did not materialize, and in 1984, the waiver was reenacted.

Upon the recommendation of the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the 1992 Legislature made all tuition waiver programs permissive and variable. The community college system chose to grant partial waivers to all students in all waiver categories. Each of the four-year institutions has developed its own methodology for granting the variable and permissive waivers.

In 1993, the Legislature included in the definition of resident student-- the spouses and dependents of active duty military personnel stationed in Washington--thus allowing them to pay tuition and fees at the resident student level. At that time, the active duty military personnel remained in the nonresident category and remained eligible for the permissive and variable waiver of the nonresident tuition differential.

Currently, active duty military who attend college are partially reimbursed by the armed forces. Each military branch reimburses its members for 75 percent of tuition, up to \$125 per quarter hour or \$187.50 per semester hour. There is a cap of \$3,500 per member, per year.

Summary: Active duty military personnel stationed in Washington are included in the definition of resident student-- and pay tuition and fees at the resident student level.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 45 0

House 98 0

Effective: June 8, 2000
June 30, 2002 (Section 2)