

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6010

As Passed Senate, February 9, 2000

Title: An act relating to operating fee waivers.

Brief Description: Creating operating fees waivers not supported by state general fund appropriations.

Sponsors: Senators West, Jacobsen and Sheahan.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/1/99, 3/3/99 [DP]; 1/24/00 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/12/99, 44-0; 2/9/00, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: Washington institutions of higher education are authorized to waive all or a portion of students' tuition, up to a limit specified in statute. The amount of waived tuition, up to the fixed limit, will be reimbursed by the state general fund.

RCW 28B.15.910 lists the maximum percentage of total tuition revenue that may be waived for each public four-year institution and the community college system as a whole. Tuition that is waived up to these limits is reimbursed to the institutions from the state general fund. The following list outlines the maximum percentage of tuition that may be waived: University of Washington, 21 percent; Washington State University, 20 percent; Eastern Washington University, 11 percent; Western Washington University, 10 percent; Central Washington University, 8 percent; The Evergreen State College, 6 percent; the community colleges as a whole, 35 percent.

The recipients of these waivers are listed in statute, and include but are not limited to selected veterans and military employees, unemployed or underemployed persons, students demonstrating need, resident graduate service appointments, and residents of states with reciprocity agreements with Washington.

Summary of Bill: Institutions may offer additional waivers for any student. The authority to waive a portion or all of tuition for students above the established limits is created. There is no state general fund support for these additional waivers.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The state should not be in the waiver business because tuition money belongs to the institutions. It no longer flows through the state general fund. COP supports this flexibility tool. It is in addition to the reimbursed waivers. We need this as a recruitment tool and to use as a financial aid supplement. It is important to put this language into statute and provide the institutions with management flexibility. WSU has used this tool to attract out-of-state students.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator James West, prime sponsor; Terry Teale, COP; Larry Ganders, WSU.

House Amendment(s): Waivers granted by a community college or a technical college will be in accordance with state board policy. The institutions must prepare a report on the costs and benefits of waivers granted under this act and submit it to the Legislature every two years.