

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6645

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 4, 2000
Ways & Means, February 8, 2000

Title: An act relating to the future teachers conditional scholarship.

Brief Description: Changing the future teachers conditional scholarship program.

Revised for ¶ Substitute: Extending the future teachers conditional scholarship program for classified employees and modifying the program.

Sponsors: Senators Eide, Swecker, Brown, Rasmussen, McAuliffe, Goings, Patterson, Hochstatter, Zarelli, Kohl-Welles, Finkbeiner, Shin and Bauer; by request of Governor Locke and Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/2/2000, 2/4/2000 [DPS-WM].
Ways & Means: 2/7/2000, 2/8/2000 [DPS (HIE)].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6645 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6645 as recommended by Committee on Higher Education be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Loveland, Chair; Bauer, Vice Chair; Fairley, Fraser, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, Rasmussen, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Winsley and Zarelli.

Staff: Karen Barrett (786-7711)

Background: The Future Teachers' Conditional Scholarship was established in 1987 and is administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). The program was designed to attract academically proficient students, including students who can act as role models for students from minority backgrounds, into the teaching profession. Qualified high school seniors and college students who intend to teach are eligible to participate. Participants may receive up to \$3,000 per year to attend an accredited college or university in the state of Washington. Students are eligible to receive a conditional scholarship for a maximum of five years.

Students incur an obligation to repay the scholarship, with interest, unless they teach for two years in an approved education program in Washington for each year of scholarship received.

The scholarship program is not presently funded.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Future Teachers' Conditional Scholarship is modified. The scholarship is for K-12 classified employees and other future teachers.

The HECB is directed to make special efforts to recruit teacher candidates from "historically underrepresented populations" « those groups of Americans whose participation in college has been significantly lower than their representation in the overall population.

The amount of the award is increased from \$3,000 to \$4,000 for the 2000-01 academic year and is adjusted based on resident, undergraduate tuition increases in subsequent years. Students may receive the award for a maximum of five years.

The loan is forgiven in two ways: (1) a student must teach in an approved program for two years for each year of the scholarship, or (2) a student who teaches in a teacher shortage area will have the loan forgiven year for year.

Repayment, with interest, is required for those students who do not repay the loan through eligible teaching activity. The rate of interest must be determined annually by the HECB. Minimum payment is set by the board, but not less than \$50 per month. Ten years is the maximum time allowed for repayment.

An "equalization charge" is applied to those recipients who fail to satisfy their teaching obligation and are required to pay all or a part of the conditional scholarship. The equalization charge is added to the principal of the loan so that the debt then equals that of the debt that would have been incurred had the student received a Stafford federally subsidized loan.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Program eligibility is expanded to include K-12 classified employees who do not hold a Washington teaching certificate.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This is a good recruitment tool that will encourage students to enter the teaching profession. The scholarship is part of the Governor's plan to improve teacher quality. OSPI is supportive of the program and has included it in the budget request. Incentives for recruitment and retention are needed. The flexibility with regard to diversity and shortage areas will be very helpful.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Tracey Eide, prime sponsor; Carolyn Busch, Governor's office; Sarah Corrie, OSPI; Bruce Botka, HECB; Doug Nelson, PSE; Wendy Podes-Konopaloki, WFT; Carolyn Busch, Governor's Office, OFM.