
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5344

State of Washington

56th Legislature

1999 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen, Shin, Eide, McAuliffe, Winsley, Thibaudeau, Gardner, Bauer, Haugen and Rasmussen)

Read first time 03/01/99.

1 AN ACT Relating to higher educational opportunities for children
2 who have been in foster care; adding a new section to chapter 28B.80
3 RCW; creating a new section; and making appropriations.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that access to a
6 higher education will give children who are in foster care hope for the
7 future. The legislature further finds that such assistance will help
8 these children become successful, productive, contributing citizens and
9 avoid the cycles of abuse, poverty, violence, and delinquency.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.80 RCW
11 to read as follows:

12 (1) The foster care scholarship program is created. The purpose of
13 the program is to help students who were in foster care attend an
14 institution of higher education in the state of Washington.

15 (2) To the extent funds are appropriated, the higher education
16 coordinating board shall award grants to eligible recipients to help
17 cover the costs of receiving a higher education at an institution of
18 higher education. The grant shall be in an amount not to exceed the

1 costs of obtaining a higher education, excluding tuition. The higher
2 education coordinating board shall establish procedures, by rule, to
3 disburse the awards as direct grants to students.

4 (3) To qualify for the grant, recipients shall be between the ages
5 of sixteen and twenty-three and have been in foster care in the state
6 of Washington for a minimum of six months since their fifteenth
7 birthday. Recipients must be eligible for financial aid under the
8 state student financial aid program. Recipients shall enter an
9 institution of higher education in Washington state within three years
10 of high school graduation or receipt of a certificate of educational
11 competence and maintain a satisfactory rating. Students are eligible
12 to receive a maximum of eight semesters or twelve quarters of grants
13 for undergraduate study if they meet the age requirements under this
14 section. Students may transfer among in-state public and independent
15 institutions of higher education in this state and continue to receive
16 the grant.

17 (4) No grant may be awarded to any student who is pursuing a degree
18 in theology.

19 (5) Grants under this section shall not affect eligibility for the
20 state student financial aid program.

21 (6) The higher education coordinating board shall work with the
22 department of social and health services and the superintendent of
23 public instruction to provide information about this program to
24 children in foster care in high schools in the state of Washington and
25 to persons over the age of sixteen who would be eligible for the
26 program.

27 (7) As used in this section, "institutions of higher education"
28 means both public and independent institutions of higher education as
29 defined by this section.

30 (8) As used in this section, "institution of higher education"
31 means the state universities, the regional universities, The Evergreen
32 State College, the community colleges, and the technical colleges.

33 (9) As used in this section, "independent institution of higher
34 education" means a private, nonprofit educational institution, the main
35 campus of which is permanently situated in the state, open to residents
36 of the state, providing programs of education beyond the high school
37 level leading at least to the baccalaureate degree, and accredited by
38 the Northwest association of schools and colleges as of the effective
39 date of this section, and other institutions as may be developed that

1 are approved by the higher education coordinating board as meeting
2 equivalent standards as those institutions accredited under this
3 section.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of five hundred thousand dollars is
5 appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2000, and the sum of
6 five hundred thousand dollars is appropriated for the fiscal year
7 ending June 30, 2001, from the state general fund to the higher
8 education coordinating board. These funds shall be expended solely for
9 foster care scholarships as established pursuant to section 2 of this
10 act, which may include expenses associated with the administration of
11 the foster care scholarship program.

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