
SENATE BILL 6425

State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Senators McAuliffe, Kohl-Welles, Sheahan, Winsley, Rasmussen and Bauer; by request of Committee on Advanced College Tuition Payment, Higher Education Coordinating Board and State Treasurer

Read first time 01/17/2000. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the advanced college tuition payment program;
2 and amending RCW 28B.95.020, 28B.95.025, 28B.95.030, 28B.95.050,
3 28B.95.060, 28B.95.070, 28B.95.100, and 28B.95.110.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.95.020 and 1997 c 289 s 2 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter,
8 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

9 (1) "Academic year" means the regular nine-month, three-quarter, or
10 two-semester period annually occurring between July 1st and June 30th.

11 (2) "Account" means the Washington advanced college tuition payment
12 program account established for the deposit of all money received by
13 the board from eligible purchasers and interest earnings on investments
14 of funds in the account, as well as for all expenditures on behalf of
15 eligible beneficiaries for the redemption of tuition units.

16 (3) "Board" means the higher education coordinating board as
17 defined in chapter 28B.80 RCW.

18 (4) "Committee on advanced tuition payment" or "committee" means a
19 committee of the following members (~~or their designees~~): The state

1 treasurer, the director of the office of financial management, (~~and~~
2 ~~the chair~~) the executive director of the higher education coordinating
3 board, or their designees, and two members to be appointed by the
4 governor, one representing program participants and one private
5 business representative with marketing, public relations, or financial
6 expertise.

7 (5) "Governing body" means the (~~entity~~) committee empowered by
8 the legislature to administer the Washington advanced college tuition
9 payment program.

10 (6) "Contractual obligation" means a legally binding contract of
11 the state with the purchaser and the beneficiary establishing that
12 purchases of tuition units will be worth the same number of tuition
13 units at the time of redemption as they were worth at the time of the
14 purchase.

15 (7) "Eligible beneficiary" means the person for whom the tuition
16 unit will be redeemed for attendance at an institution of higher
17 education. The beneficiary is that person named by the purchaser at
18 the time that a tuition unit contract is accepted by the (~~board~~)
19 governing body. With the exception of tuition unit contracts purchased
20 by qualified organizations as future scholarships, the beneficiary must
21 reside in the state of Washington or otherwise be a resident of the
22 state of Washington at the time the tuition unit contract is accepted
23 by the (~~board~~) governing body.

24 (8) "Eligible purchaser" means an individual or organization that
25 has entered into a tuition unit contract with the (~~board~~) governing
26 body for the purchase of tuition units for an eligible beneficiary.

27 (9) "Full-time tuition charges" means resident tuition charges at
28 a state institution of higher education for enrollments between ten
29 credits and eighteen credit hours per academic term.

30 (10) "Institution of higher education" means an institution that
31 offers education beyond the secondary level and is (~~accredited by a~~
32 ~~nationally recognized accrediting association or is licensed to do~~
33 ~~business in the state in which it is located~~) recognized by the
34 internal revenue service under chapter 529 of the internal revenue
35 code.

36 (11) "Investment board" means the state investment board as defined
37 in chapter 43.33A RCW.

38 (12) "State institution of higher education" means institutions of
39 higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

1 (13) "Tuition and fees" means undergraduate tuition and services
2 and activities fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020 and 28B.15.041 rounded
3 to the nearest whole dollar. The maximum tuition and fees charges
4 recognized for beneficiaries enrolled in a state technical college
5 shall be equal to the tuition and fees for the community college
6 system.

7 (14) "Tuition unit contract" means a contract between an eligible
8 purchaser and the (~~board~~) governing body, or a successor agency
9 appointed for administration of this chapter, for the purchase of
10 tuition units for a specified beneficiary that may be redeemed at a
11 later date for an equal number of tuition units.

12 (15) "Unit purchase price" means the minimum cost to purchase one
13 tuition unit for an eligible beneficiary. Generally, the minimum
14 purchase price is one percent of the undergraduate weighted average
15 tuition and fees for the current year, rounded to the nearest whole
16 dollar, adjusted for the costs of administration and adjusted to ensure
17 the actuarial soundness of the account. The analysis for price setting
18 shall also include, but not be limited to consideration of past and
19 projected patterns of tuition increases, program liability, past and
20 projected investment returns, and the need for a prudent stabilization
21 reserve.

22 (16) "Weighted average tuition" shall be calculated as the sum of
23 the undergraduate tuition and services and activities fees for each
24 four-year state institution of higher education, multiplied by the
25 respective full-time equivalent student enrollment at each institution
26 divided by the sum total of undergraduate full-time equivalent student
27 enrollments of all four-year state institutions of higher education,
28 rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

29 (17) "Weighted average tuition unit" is the value of the weighted
30 average tuition and fees divided by one hundred. The weighted average
31 is the basis upon which tuition benefits are calculated for graduate
32 program enrollments and for attendance at nonstate institutions of
33 higher education and is the basis for any refunds provided from the
34 program.

35 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.95.025 and 1998 c 69 s 2 are each amended to read
36 as follows:

37 The (~~committee~~) board shall maintain appropriate offices and
38 employ and fix compensation of such personnel as may be necessary to

1 perform ~~((its))~~ the advanced college tuition payment program duties
2 ~~((including, but not be limited to a director, an accountant, and a~~
3 ~~confidential secretary))~~. The board shall consult with the governing
4 body on the selection, compensation, and other issues relating to the
5 employment of the program director. The positions are exempt from
6 classified service under chapter 41.06 RCW. The employees shall be
7 employees of the higher education coordinating board.

8 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28B.95.030 and 1997 c 289 s 3 are each amended to read
9 as follows:

10 (1) The Washington advanced college tuition payment program shall
11 be administered by the committee on advanced tuition payment which
12 shall be chaired by the ~~((representative from the higher education~~
13 ~~coordinating))~~ executive director of the board. The committee shall be
14 supported by staff of the board.

15 (2) ~~((The committee shall assess the administration and projected~~
16 ~~financial solvency of the program and make a recommendation to the~~
17 ~~legislature by the end of the second year after July 27, 1997, as to~~
18 ~~disposition of the further administration of the program.~~

19 ~~(3))~~(a) The Washington advanced college tuition payment program
20 shall consist of the sale of tuition units, which may be redeemed by
21 the beneficiary at a future date for an equal number of tuition units
22 regardless of any increase in the price of tuition, that may have
23 occurred in the interval.

24 (b) Each purchase shall be worth a specific number of or fraction
25 of tuition units at each state institution of higher education as
26 determined by the ~~((board))~~ governing body.

27 (c) The number of tuition units necessary to pay for a full year's,
28 full-time undergraduate tuition and fee charges at a state institution
29 of higher education shall be set by the ~~((board))~~ governing body at the
30 time a purchaser enters into a tuition unit contract.

31 (d) The governing body may limit the number of tuition units
32 purchased by any one purchaser or on behalf of any one beneficiary,
33 however, no limit may be imposed that is less than that necessary to
34 achieve four years of full-time, undergraduate tuition charges at a
35 state institution of higher education. The governing body also may, at
36 its discretion, limit the number of participants, if needed, to ensure
37 the actuarial soundness and integrity of the program.

1 (~~(4)~~) (3)(a) No tuition unit may be redeemed until two years
2 after the purchase of the unit. Units may be redeemed for enrollment
3 at any institution of higher education that is recognized by the
4 internal revenue service under chapter 529 of the internal revenue
5 code.

6 (b) Units redeemed at a nonstate institution of higher education or
7 for graduate enrollment shall be redeemed at the (~~current weighted~~
8 ~~average tuition unit~~) rate for state public institutions in effect at
9 the time of redemption.

10 (~~(5)~~) (4) The governing body shall determine the conditions under
11 which the tuition benefit may be transferred to another family member.
12 In permitting such transfers, the governing body may not allow the
13 tuition benefit to be bought, sold, bartered, or otherwise exchanged
14 for goods and services by either the beneficiary or the purchaser.

15 (~~(6)~~) (5) The governing body shall administer the Washington
16 advanced college tuition payment program in a manner reasonably
17 designed to be actuarially sound, such that the assets of the trust
18 will be sufficient to defray the obligations of the trust including the
19 costs of administration. The governing body may, at its discretion,
20 discount the minimum purchase price for certain kinds of purchases such
21 as those from families with young children, as long as the actuarial
22 soundness of the account is not jeopardized.

23 (~~(7)~~) (6) The governing body shall annually determine current
24 value of a tuition unit and the value of the weighted average tuition
25 unit.

26 (~~(8)~~) (7) The governing body shall promote, advertise, and
27 publicize the Washington advanced college tuition payment program.

28 (~~(9)~~) (8) In addition to any other powers conferred by this
29 chapter, the governing body may:

30 (a) Impose reasonable limits on the number of tuition units or
31 units that may be used in any one year;

32 (b) Determine and set any time limits, if necessary, for the use of
33 benefits under this chapter;

34 (c) Impose and collect administrative fees and charges in
35 connection with any transaction under this chapter;

36 (d) Appoint and use advisory committees as needed to provide
37 program direction and guidance;

38 (e) Formulate and adopt all other policies and rules necessary for
39 the efficient administration of the program;

1 (f) Consider the addition of an advanced payment program for room
2 and board contracts and also consider a college savings program;

3 (g) Purchase insurance from insurers licensed to do business in the
4 state, to provide for coverage against any loss in connection with the
5 account's property, assets, or activities or to further insure the
6 value of the tuition units;

7 (h) Make, execute, and deliver contracts, conveyances, and other
8 instruments necessary to the exercise and discharge of its powers and
9 duties under this chapter;

10 (i) Contract for the provision for all or part of the services
11 necessary for the management and operation of the program with other
12 state or nonstate entities authorized to do business in the state;

13 (j) Contract for other services or for goods needed by the
14 ~~((board))~~ governing body in the conduct of its business under this
15 chapter;

16 ~~((k))~~ ~~((Employ all personnel as necessary to carry out its
17 responsibilities under this chapter and to fix the compensation of
18 these persons;~~

19 ~~((l))~~ Contract with financial consultants, actuaries, auditors, and
20 other consultants as necessary to carry out its responsibilities under
21 this chapter;

22 ~~((m))~~ (l) Solicit and accept cash donations and grants from any
23 person, governmental agency, private business, or organization; and

24 ~~((n))~~ (m) Perform all acts necessary and proper to carry out the
25 duties and responsibilities of this program under this chapter.

26 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28B.95.050 and 1997 c 289 s 5 are each amended to read
27 as follows:

28 The Washington advanced college tuition payment program is an
29 essential state governmental function. Contracts with eligible
30 participants shall be contractual obligations legally binding on the
31 state as set forth in this chapter. If, and only if, the moneys in the
32 account are projected to be insufficient to cover the state's
33 contracted expenses for a given biennium, then the legislature shall
34 appropriate to the account the amount necessary to cover such expenses.

35 The tuition and fees charged by ~~((a state))~~ an eligible institution
36 of higher education to an eligible beneficiary for a current enrollment
37 shall be paid by the account to the extent the beneficiary has
38 remaining unused tuition units for the appropriate school. ~~((The~~

1 ~~tuition and fees charged to a beneficiary for graduate level~~
2 ~~enrollments or by a nonstate institution of higher education shall be~~
3 ~~paid by the account to the extent that the beneficiary has remaining~~
4 ~~weighted average tuition units.))~~

5 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28B.95.060 and 1998 c 69 s 4 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 (1) The Washington advanced college tuition payment program account
8 is created in the custody of the state treasurer. The account shall be
9 a discrete nontreasury account retaining its interest earnings in
10 accordance with RCW 43.79A.040.

11 (2) The governing body shall deposit in the account all money
12 received for the program. The account shall be self-sustaining and
13 consist of payments received from purchasers of tuition units and funds
14 received from other sources, public or private. With the exception of
15 investment and operating costs associated with the investment of money
16 by the investment board paid under RCW 43.33A.160 and 43.84.160, the
17 account shall be credited with all investment income earned by the
18 account. Disbursements from the account are exempt from appropriations
19 and the allotment provisions of chapter 43.88 RCW. Money used for
20 program administration is subject to the allotment ~~((and budgetary~~
21 ~~controls of chapter 43.88 RCW, and))~~ of all expenditures. However, an
22 appropriation is not required for such expenditures. Program
23 administration shall include, but not be limited to: The salaries and
24 expenses of the program personnel including lease payments, travel, and
25 goods and services necessary for program operation; contracts for
26 program promotion and advertisement, audits, and account management;
27 and other general costs of conducting the business of the program.

28 (3) The assets of the account may be spent without appropriation
29 for the purpose of making payments to institutions of higher education
30 on behalf of the qualified beneficiaries, making refunds, transfers, or
31 direct payments upon the termination of the Washington advanced college
32 tuition payment program. Disbursements from the account shall be made
33 only on the authorization of the ~~((board))~~ governing body.

34 **Sec. 6.** RCW 28B.95.070 and 1997 c 289 s 7 are each amended to read
35 as follows:

36 (1) The investment board has the full power to invest, reinvest,
37 manage, contract, sell, or exchange investment money in the account.

1 All investment and operating costs associated with the investment of
2 money shall be paid pursuant to RCW 43.33A.160 and 43.84.160. With the
3 exception of these expenses, the earnings from the investment of the
4 money shall be retained by the account.

5 (2) All investments made by the investment board shall be made with
6 the exercise of that degree of judgment and care pursuant to RCW
7 43.33A.140 and the investment policy established by the state
8 investment board.

9 (3) As deemed appropriate by the investment board, money in the
10 account may be commingled for investment with other funds subject to
11 investment by the board.

12 (4) The authority to establish all policies relating to the
13 account, other than the investment policies as set forth in subsections
14 (1) through (3) of this section, resides with the (~~board~~) governing
15 body. With the exception of expenses of the investment board set forth
16 in subsection (1) of this section, disbursements from the account shall
17 be made only on the authorization of the governing body, and money in
18 the account may be spent only for the purposes of the program as
19 specified in this chapter.

20 (5) The investment board shall routinely consult and communicate
21 with the governing body on the investment policy, earnings of the
22 trust, and related needs of the program.

23 **Sec. 7.** RCW 28B.95.100 and 1997 c 289 s 10 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) The (~~committee~~) governing body, in planning and devising the
26 program, shall consult with the investment board, the state treasurer,
27 (~~the state actuary,~~) the office of financial management, and the
28 institutions of higher education.

29 (2) The governing body may seek the assistance of the state
30 agencies named in subsection (1) of this section, private financial
31 institutions, and any other qualified party with experience in the
32 areas of accounting, actuary, risk management, or investment management
33 to assist with preparing an accounting of the program and ensuring the
34 fiscal soundness of the account.

35 (3) State agencies and public institutions of higher education
36 shall fully cooperate with the governing body in matters relating to
37 the program in order to ensure the solvency of the account and ability
38 of the governing body to meet outstanding commitments.

1 **Sec. 8.** RCW 28B.95.110 and 1997 c 289 s 12 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) The intent of the Washington advanced college tuition payment
4 program is to redeem tuition units for attendance at an institution of
5 higher education. Refunds shall be issued under specific conditions
6 that may include the following:

7 (a) Certification that the beneficiary, who is eighteen years of
8 age or older, will not attend an institution of higher education, will
9 result in a refund not to exceed ~~((ninety five percent of))~~ the current
10 weighted average tuition and fees in effect at the time of such
11 certification minus a penalty at the rate established by the internal
12 revenue service under chapter 529 of the internal revenue code. No
13 more than one hundred tuition units may be refunded per year to any
14 individual making this certification. The refund shall be made no
15 sooner than ninety days after such certification, less any
16 administrative processing fees assessed by the governing body~~((The~~
17 ~~governing body may, at its discretion, impose a greater penalty))~~;

18 (b) If there is certification of the death or disability of the
19 beneficiary, the refund shall be equal to one hundred percent of any
20 remaining unused tuition units valued at the current weighted average
21 tuition units at the time that such certification is submitted to the
22 ~~((board))~~ governing body, less any administrative processing fees
23 assessed by the ~~((board))~~ governing body;

24 (c) If there is certification by the student of graduation or
25 program completion, the refund ~~((may))~~ shall be as great as one hundred
26 percent of any remaining unused weighted average tuition units at the
27 time that such certification is submitted to the governing body, less
28 any administrative processing fees assessed by the governing body. The
29 governing body may, at its discretion, impose a penalty if needed to
30 comply with federal tax rules;

31 (d) If there is certification of other tuition and fee
32 scholarships, which will cover the cost of tuition for the eligible
33 beneficiary. The refund shall be equal to one hundred percent of the
34 current weighted average tuition units in effect at the time of the
35 refund request, plus any administrative processing fees assessed by the
36 governing body. The refund under this subsection may not exceed the
37 value of the scholarship;

38 (e) Incorrect or misleading information provided by the purchaser
39 or beneficiaries may result in a refund of the purchaser's investment,

1 less any administrative processing fees assessed by the governing body.
2 The value of the refund will not exceed the actual dollar value of the
3 purchaser's contributions; and

4 (f) The governing body may determine other circumstances qualifying
5 for refunds of remaining unused tuition units and may determine the
6 value of that refund.

7 (2) With the exception of subsection (1)(b) (~~and~~), (e), and (f)
8 of this section no refunds may be made before the (~~beneficiary is at~~
9 ~~least eighteen years of age~~) units have been held for two years.

--- END ---