

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2088

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to conditional scholarships.

Brief Description: Providing conditional scholarships.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Cox, Keiser, Tokuda, Skinner, Fromhold, Jarrett, Gombosky, Quall, Santos and Schual-Berke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/19/01, 2/23/01 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Offers a conditional scholarship for future K-12 teachers, or existing teachers who want to complete an additional endorsement, in the areas of math, science, technology, or bilingual education.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Cox, Republican Co-Chair; Kenney, Democratic Co-Chair; Gombosky, Democratic Vice Chair; Jarrett, Republican Vice Chair; Dunn, Fromhold, Lantz and Skinner.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The future teachers conditional scholarship program was created in 1987 and was designed to attract individuals into the teaching profession. The program has not been funded since 1995. During the 2000 Legislature, a conditional scholarship for K-12 employees was included in the budget proviso and the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) is currently administering that program.

On February 5, the committee heard House Bill 1399, "Providing conditional scholarships for future bilingual and English as a second language teachers. This bill

added a new section to and amended RCW 28B.102.020, 050. Since hearing that bill, suggestions have been made to reflect the current K-12 conditional scholarship program from the budget proviso, thereby lowering the administrative cost, to include the disciplines of math, science, and technology, and to remove English as a second language. Removing English as a second language from the title required that a new bill be offered.

Summary of Bill:

Conditional scholarships of up to \$4,000 for the 2001-02 academic year will be offered for full or part-time studies for individuals who declare an intention to complete an approved preparation program leading to teacher certification with an endorsement in math, science, technology, or bilingual education. Teachers who are seeking an additional endorsement in math, science, technology or bilingual education are also eligible.

The HECB will administer the scholarship program and will give priority to bilingual students demonstrating language proficiency. An applicant's demonstrated academic ability and commitment to serve as a teacher within the state of Washington will also be considered.

Loans will be forgiven at the rate of one year of loan for two years of teaching service. Recipients who teach in geographic or subject-matter shortage areas may have their loans forgiven at the rate of one year of loan for one year of teaching service. Recipients who fail to fulfill the required teaching service will repay the loan with interest.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: There is a need for more bilingual teachers not only for instructional purposes, but also to bridge the cultural and communication barrier with parents. The mainstream view is that parents of bilingual students are not involved in their children's education and are viewed by the schools in an unfavorable light. Latino students have traditionally scored low on most tests. This has nothing to do with intelligence. It speaks to the need for bilingual teachers to break the language barrier. However, the problem is more likely to be an issue of understanding. The conditional loan offers hope to low income families who are reluctant to take out loans because of an inability to repay. There is a need for bilingual teachers, particularly in the areas of science and math.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Kenney, prime sponsor.

(HB 1399) Representative Kenney, prime sponsor; Tom Stritikus, University of Washington; Greg Williamson and Richard Gomez, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Samuel Martinez, Latino Education Achievement Project.