

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5699

As Passed Senate, February 1, 2002

Title: An act relating to the Washington state scholars program.

Brief Description: Modifying the Washington state scholars program.

Sponsors: Senators Carlson, Benton, Honeyford, Hale and Zarelli.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/15/01, 2/20/01 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/10/01, 48-0; 2/1/02, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: The 1981 Legislature created the Washington Scholars Program to recognize and honor three high school seniors from each legislative district for their outstanding academic achievement, leadership ability, and community service. The statute was amended in 1987 to add a new section authorizing a four-year tuition and fee waiver for undergraduate study for Scholars attending any public four-year or two year institution. The statute was further amended by the 1988 Legislature to add a grant program for Scholars attending private Washington colleges or universities. The grant may not exceed the yearly, full-time resident, undergraduate tuition and fees charged at public research universities and must be matched by the private school with institutional funds. The waiver was mandatory for awards received prior to June 30, 1994, and is permissive for those Scholars who receive the award after June 30, 1994.

The Washington Scholars Program is administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) in cooperation with the Washington Association of Secondary School Principals. A 1994 amendment to the statute clarified that the program honors three outstanding seniors residing in each legislative district. Students are nominated by the principal of the high school.

Summary of Bill: The Washington Scholars Program is expanded to honor students who reside in a specific legislative district while commuting to a private high school in Oregon or Idaho and continuing to reside in Washington. Principals of the Oregon or Idaho private high school submit nominations to the Washington Association of Secondary Principals who then forwards these nominations with those names submitted by the Washington high schools.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 2001.

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

Testimony For: This is a constituent request. A student who attends private school across the border, but who resides in Washington, wants to be considered for the scholarship. Going to high school in Oregon, but residing in Washington, the student is eligible for scholarships in neither state. They don't even have the opportunity to apply. These high quality students would like to look at colleges and universities in Washington. Washington needs to keep high quality people here to fill high skill jobs. An expansion to the competition base would result from this change.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Don Carlson, prime sponsor; Tom and Matt Pender, Karen Conway, Vancouver families.