

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1731

As of March 19, 2003

Title: An act relating to the educational opportunity grant program.

Brief Description: Changing provisions in the educational opportunity grant program.

Sponsors: House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Kenney, Cox and Chase; by request of Higher Education Coordinating Board).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/24/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: The Educational Opportunity Grant Program (EOG) was created in 1990 as a demonstration project to expand opportunities for needy Washington students with transfer degrees to obtain a baccalaureate degree. Eligibility for the grants was originally limited to placebound students living in one of the 13 counties served by the newly created branch campuses and attending any accredited public or private college or university except a branch campus. The grant amount of up to \$2,500 does not exceed the student's financial need. Creation of EOG was based on an assumption that the size and cost of branch campus development might be reduced by encouraging students to attend another institution with enrollment capacity -- especially a private college or university concerned that branch campuses could reduce enrollments in the private sector.

The program is administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) which has completed an evaluation of the program and recommends certain changes to the program to reflect the current educational climate.

Summary of Bill: Eligible, needy students applying for EOG may live in any of Washington's 39 counties rather than being limited to the 13 counties served by a branch campus. The same residency standards used for the State Need Grant apply to the EOG. To be eligible for the grant, in addition to completion of an Associate of Arts Degree, students may have completed an Associate of Science Degree.

EOG awards may be used at any accredited higher education institution approved for participation by the HECB, including branch campuses and in-state programs affiliated with colleges or universities accredited in other states. The restriction that grants are for attendance at institutions with unused enrollment capacity is removed.

The maximum amount of the grant is set at \$2,500.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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