

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5415

As Passed Senate, March 11, 2003

Title: An act relating to exceptional faculty award grants.

Brief Description: Changing exceptional faculty award grants.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Carlson, Spanel, Kohl-Welles and Shin; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/6/03, 2/13/03 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 3/11/03, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5415 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Carlson, Chair; Schmidt, Vice Chair; Horn, Kohl-Welles, Mulliken, B. Sheldon and Shin.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: The 1990 Legislature created the Exceptional Faculty Awards Program, designed to recognize outstanding faculty by providing faculty development awards to individuals or groups. The 1998 Legislature established that a portion of the annual savings incentive account “ in which agencies’ year-end fund balances are deposited “ be dedicated to the program.

Through the end of fiscal year 2001, the college endowments established through this program totaled approximately \$8,500,000. The 2002 Legislature obligated the program fund balance (\$2,500,000) to partially cover the settlement costs of a lawsuit with part-time faculty, and currently no further awards will be made from this account until additional funds are made available from the savings incentive account.

Under the existing program guidelines, each public community or technical college or its foundation is eligible to apply to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) for grants in increments of \$25,000 when the college can match the state funds with equal cash donations from private sources. Colleges or their foundations may apply for a maximum of four grants (\$100,000) per biennium. Colleges must deposit all funds in a separate endowment account from which only the earnings may be expended for the purposes of the program.

Summary of Bill: The award increments are reduced from \$25,000 to \$10,000.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The current \$25,000 match requirement makes it difficult for some of the smaller colleges and foundations to participate in the program. Reducing the amount to \$10,000 will allow more smaller colleges to participate. This program is an excellent example of public/private partnerships. There is a concern about removal of the \$100,000 per biennium limitation for grant application.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Carlson, prime sponsor; Loretta Seppenen, SBCTC; Wendy Rader-Konafalski, WFT.