SENATE BILL REPORT
ESHB 1497

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, March 22, 2007
Ways & Means, March 30, 2007

Title: An act relating to increasing the operating fee waiver authority for Central Washington University.

Brief Description: Increasing the operating fee waiver authority for Central Washington University.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Wallace, Anderson, Sells, Hinkle, Roberts, Warnick, Buri, B. Sullivan, Priest, Hasegawa and Dunn).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/12/07, 97-0.
  Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/21/07, 3/22/07 [DP-WM].
  Ways & Means: 3/30/07 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
  Signed by Senators Shin, Chair; Kilmer, Vice Chair; Delvin, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Schoesler and Sheldon.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.
  Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Operating Budget; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell, Hatfield, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Kohl-Welles, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Tom.

Staff: Tim Yowell (786-7435)

Background: The Legislature grants higher education institutions permission to waive all or a portion of tuition for certain types of students and purposes. The various waivers fall into three broad types: state-supported, discretionary, and space available. For state-supported

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waivers, it is assumed that state monies in the institutions' budgets will offset the tuition not collected from students to whom waivers are granted.

State-supported waivers are capped at a certain percentage of the total operating fee revenue the institution collects. Within its respective percentage caps, each institution decides how to apportion its waiver authority among the various categories of state-supported waivers. The waiver caps were established in 1992 as a result of changes to the way tuition revenue is treated. The amounts of the caps were based on the percentage of tuition revenue waived at each institution in 1992.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill: The tuition waiver authority for Central Washington University (CWU) is increased from 8 percent to 10 percent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. The bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Higher Education): PRO: CWU is presently handicapped by having the lowest tuition waiver authority. CWU has had $20 million less financial aid to offer over the years than that available at other state universities. More students will be able to afford a college education if this bill passes. It will help the college recruit a more diverse student body and enhance the total educational experience for all students.

Persons Testifying (Higher Education): PRO: Representative Wallace, prime sponsor; Mike Bogatay, Associated Students of CWU; Ann Anderson, Jim Hackabay, CWU.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means: on companion SB 5466): PRO: If CWU could waiver more tuition, it could encourage more of the many Hispanic students who live in central Washington to enroll in college.   Central would have received many more millions of dollars in support from the state over the past 13 years if it had been able to waive as much tuition as some of the other universities. This legislation has passed the Senate twice before.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): Senator Shin, prime sponsor; Mike Bogatay, Associated Students of Central Washington University; Ann Anderson, Central Washington University.