

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5969

As Passed Senate, March 9, 2007

Title: An act relating to creating a civic education travel grant program.

Brief Description: Creating the civic education travel grant program.

Sponsors: Senators Kilmer, Delvin, Kastama, Shin, Kauffman, Marr, Murray, Kohl-Welles, Hobbs and Tom.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/19/07, 2/22/07 [DP].
Passed Senate: 3/09/07, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; Holmquist, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Clements, Eide, Hewitt, Hobbs, Kauffman, Oemig, Rasmussen, Weinstein and Zarelli.

Staff: Eric Bratton (786-7438)

Background: Organizations focused on civic engagement often organize competitions for students to promote civic education and responsibility. The competitions can be statewide, regional, national, or even international. Some students from Washington who enter these competitions locally and win are unable to advance because they cannot afford the travel costs to get to the statewide, regional, national, or international finals.

Summary of Bill: The civic education travel grant program will provide travel grants to students participating in statewide, regional, national, or international civic education competitions or events. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will allocate the grants, on a competitive basis, from private donations or with amounts appropriated for this specific purpose. OSPI may accept gifts, grants, or endowments from public or private sources for the program and may spend any gifts, grants, or endowments or income from public or private sources according to their terms.

Students submitting grant applications must: (1) be residents of the state of Washington; (2) use the grants to fund travel to civic education-based competitions or events; (3) be participants in the civic education competition or event; and (4) be under the age of 21 and not yet received their high school diploma. Grant applications must include the following information: (1) a brief description of the civic education competition or event; (2) a brief

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description of what the applicant expects to learn from the competition or event; (3) the total travel costs and how much the applicant is requesting from the program; and (4) the total amount of matching funds the applicant has already secured or expects to secure. Students are encouraged to seek matching funds, in-kind contributions, or other sources of support to supplement their travel expenses. OSPI may adopt other criteria as appropriate for the review of grant proposals. Final grant awards may be for the full amount of the grant requests or for a portion of the grant request.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill allows students to participate in educational activities without having to worry about funding. Civic education is grossly overlooked. There is a compelling government interest in ensuring access to educational opportunities like the "We the People" competition.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Kilmer, prime sponsor; Rebecca Sexton, student, Gig Harbor High School.