

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6849

As Passed Senate, February 16, 2008

Title: An act relating to classification as a resident student.

Brief Description: Regarding resident student classification.

Sponsors: Senators Oemig, Weinstein, Tom, Delvin, Shin, Kilmer, Schoesler and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/06/08 [DP-WM].

Ways & Means: 2/11/08, 2/12/08 [DP, DNP, w/oRec].

Passed Senate: 2/16/08, 46-1.

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, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Tom.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Carrell.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Roach.

Staff: Tim Yowell (786-7435)

Background: There are many classifications of visas issued by the United States Department of State. The H-1B is a temporary worker classification that applies a person in a specialty occupation which requires the theoretical and practical application of a body of specialized knowledge requiring completion of a specific course of higher education or as a fashion

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model. The classification also applies to temporary workers in some programs administered by the Department of Defense. The E-3 classification applies to nationals of Australia who enter the United States to work solely in specialty occupations requiring a bachelors degree or higher, as well as their spouses and children. The L classification applies to intracompany transferees who, within the previous three years have been employed continuously for one year and who will be employed by a branch, parent, affiliate, or subsidiary of that same employer in a managerial, executive, or specialized knowledge capacity.

Summary of Bill: The definition of "resident student" for the purposes of determining whether a student pays resident tuition rates at Washington institutions of higher education is expanded. If the person has lived in Washington for at least one year and holds either an H-1B, E-3, or L visa, that person qualifies as a resident student. The spouse or child of a person holding an H-1B, E-3, or L visa also qualifies as a resident student, if the person holds lawful nonimmigrant status.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 31, 2008.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The act takes effect July 1, 2008.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Higher Education): PRO: This is about building a state of world-class workers. These individuals immediately add value to our state. They pay taxes and participate in our society. These are all properly documented individuals. Nine states already allow this. There are also individuals with other visa classifications that are already eligible for resident tuition.

Persons Testifying (Higher Education): PRO: Senator Oemig, prime sponsor; Lydia Tampz, Microsoft Corporation.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means): PRO: The purpose of the bill is to provide incentives for knowledge workers to locate in Washington, and to encourage their spouses and dependents to pursue higher education here.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Senator Oemig, prime sponsor; Greg Pearce, Microsoft Corporation.