

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5576

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Higher Education & Workforce Development, February 25, 2009

Title: An act relating to tuition waivers for state employees.

Brief Description: Changing enrollment reporting for state employees receiving tuition waivers at institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Senators Jarrett, Tom, Kilmer, Shin, Oemig and Kastama.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/13/09, 2/25/09 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Kilmer, Chair; Jarrett, Vice Chair; Becker, Ranking Minority Member; Jacobsen, Kastama, McAuliffe, Pflug, Shin and Stevens.

Staff: Wendy Malkin (786-7434)

Background: State and regional universities, The Evergreen State College, and community colleges may waive all or a portion of tuition for certain teachers, state employees, and certified instructional staff. Students enrolled under the tuition waiver must be enrolled on a space available basis and no new course sections can be created as a result of their registration.

Students enrolled under the tuition waiver are not included in enrollment statistics used to determine state-funded enrollment targets. In addition, enrollment information on students under the waiver must be maintained separately from other enrollment information and must not be included in official enrollment reports.

Summary of Bill: Students enrolled under the tuition waiver must be included in enrollment statistics used to determine state-funded enrollment targets. In addition, enrollment information on students under the waiver must be included in official enrollment reports.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 4, 2009.

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: The state employee tuition waiver is a great benefit to employees and the state. It improves the state workforce and it improves opportunities for employees. The colleges are proud to be partners in educating the state's workforce, but the colleges are not recognized for their efforts because they are not able to count these students in enrollment statistics. Some programs in the community and technical colleges are greatly impacted by the enrollment of students under the waiver. It is not fair to ask colleges to bear the burden of the tuition waiver but not let them count the students.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jarrett, prime sponsor; Rachel Solemsaas, Elise Erickson, Bellevue Community College.