

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5720

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As Amended by House, April 1, 2009

**Title:** An act relating to tuition waivers for stepchildren of veterans and national guard members.

**Brief Description:** Including stepchildren in tuition waivers for children of veterans and national guard members.

**Sponsors:** Senators Hewitt, Hobbs, Brandland and Shin.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/04/09 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/03/09, 46-1.

Passed House: 4/01/09, 97-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

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

**Staff:** Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

**Background:** Institutions must waive all tuition and fees for the children and spouses of eligible veterans or National Guard members who died or became permanently and totally disabled as a result of active service or who are missing in action or prisoners of war. "Totally disabled" means a person who has been determined to be 100 percent disabled by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. To qualify for the waiver, a child must be a Washington resident between 17 and 26 years old. A spouse must also be a Washington resident and may not have remarried. With respect to a spouse, there is a ten-year limitation which runs from the date of the veteran's death, disability, or federal determination of POW/MIA status.

Waiver recipients may attend part-time or full-time. Total credits earned pursuant to the waiver may not exceed 200 quarter credits or the equivalent of semester credits. Tuition waivers for graduate students are not required but are encouraged.

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*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.*

**Summary of Bill:** The term "child" is defined as a biological child, adopted child, or stepchild.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**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 is the second time the Legislature has needed to clarify language in this law. This will help the Attorney General's office interpret the statute as the Legislature intended.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Hewitt, prime sponsor.

**House Amendment(s):** A redundant reference to state statute is removed.