

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5749

PARTIAL VETO C 12 L 11 E 1 Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regarding the Washington advanced college tuition payment (GET) program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Brown, Hewitt and Shin).

Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Higher Education
House Committee on Ways & Means

Background: The Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) Program is Washington's 529 prepaid college tuition plan. Families can prepay for their child's college tuition today knowing that the value of their account is guaranteed by the state to keep pace with rising college tuition. Since GET began in 1998, families have opened more than 119,000 accounts.

The state guarantees that 100 GET units will cover one year of resident undergraduate tuition and state-mandated fees at the most expensive Washington public university. GET accounts can be used at nearly any public or private college in the country. Families can buy between one and 500 units per child, and the account will benefit from tax-free growth and withdrawals. To date, 16,500 students have used their GET accounts in all 50 states.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board administers the GET Program while the State Investment Board oversees its investments. A five-member committee establishes the policies of the program and sets the price of the GET unit, currently \$117.

Summary: The Committee on Advanced Tuition Payment (Committee) utilizes the State Actuary in reviewing the Guaranteed Education Tuition Program rather than a nationally recognized actuary, but the Committee may, at its discretion, obtain an assessment by a nationally recognized actuary. The Committee, with the State Actuary, reviews the program in light of passage of E2SHB 1795 (Higher Education Opportunity Act) and makes any necessary changes to the program for units purchased on or after September 1, 2011.

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.

A legislative advisory committee to the Committee on Advanced Tuition Payment is established. The advisory committee provides advice to the Committee and the state actuary regarding the administration of the program including, but not limited to, pricing guidelines, the tuition unit price, and the unit payout value.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0	
House	90	2	(House amended)

First Special Session

Senate	41	3
House	89	7

Effective: June 6, 2011 (Sections 1–6).
August 24, 2011.

Partial Veto Summary: The Governor vetoed section 1 of the bill which would have expanded the membership of the Committee on Advanced Tuition Payment to include citizen and business representatives.