

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1011

As Passed House:
February 11, 2014

Title: An act relating to removing the one-year waiting period for veterans or active members of the military for the purpose of eligibility for resident tuition.

Brief Description: Removing the one-year waiting period for veterans or active members of the military for purposes of eligibility for resident tuition.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, Seaquist, Sells, Zeiger, Ryu, Liias, Hudgins, Morrell, Ormsby, Hansen, Bergquist, Reykdal, Haler, Klippert, Fey, Magendanz, Jinkins, MacEwen and Hayes.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/22/13, 1/24/13, 1/29/13, 2/12/13 [DP];
Appropriations Subcommittee on Education: 2/20/13 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/14, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Expands eligibility to pay resident tuition for students on active military duty, National Guard members, and their spouses and dependents under certain conditions.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fagan, Hansen, Hargrove, Johnson, Magendanz, Reykdal, Riccelli, Sawyer, Scott, Sells, Smith, Tarleton and Wylie.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Pedersen.

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

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.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Fagan, Ranking Minority Member; Dahlquist, Haler, Pettigrew, Seaquist, Sullivan, Wilcox and Maxwell.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Carlyle.

Staff: Catrina Lucero (786-7192).

Background:

Establishing Residency for Tuition Purposes.

In Washington, as in most other states, establishing residency for tuition purposes at public institutions of higher education has two components: (1) the establishment of an official domicile, and (2) a waiting period of one year after establishing a domicile. A collection of evidence is required to prove an individual's domicile. Individuals can only have one legal domicile in the United States at one time.

Residency for Active Military and Veterans.

State statute directs that active duty military personnel stationed in Washington and their dependents are eligible to pay resident tuition. Individuals who separate from the military are required to meet specific residency requirements which include a waiting period of one year following establishment of Washington as their official domicile.

The Post 9/11 GI Bill provides postsecondary education benefits that cover in-state tuition costs at public institutions. Nonresident tuition may be significantly higher. For example, for 2012-13, average resident tuition at University of Washington-Seattle is \$12,383 and nonresident tuition is \$29,938. The average tuition and fees for students taking 15 credits during the academic year at community and technical colleges is \$4,000 for residents and \$9,235 for nonresidents.

There are three public colleges (Walla Walla Community College, Washington State University and The Evergreen State College) and 27 private colleges that participate in the 'Yellow Ribbon' program that is an element of the post 9/11 GI bill. In order to participate, a postsecondary education institution must make a commitment to contributing a portion of funds to cover the difference between resident and nonresident tuition for veterans.

However, participation is limited as schools place a maximum limit on the number of students who may participate.

Summary of Engrossed Bill:

Eligibility to pay resident tuition is expanded for students on active military duty, National Guard members, and their spouses and dependents under certain conditions.

A student who is on active military duty or a member of the National Guard but is not stationed in the state is eligible to pay resident tuition as long as he or she entered service as a

Washington resident and maintained Washington as his or her domicile. Dependents of such active military individuals or National Guard members are also eligible for in-state tuition.

A student who is honorably discharged from the military after at least two years of service and who enters an institution of higher education in Washington within one year of the date of separation is eligible for in-state tuition as long as he or she:

- designated Washington as his or her intended domicile at the time of separation;
- has Washington as his or her official home of record; or
- moves to Washington and establishes a domicile as determined by a collection of evidence as defined in state law.

Spouses or dependents of such honorably discharged veterans who meet certain conditions, are also eligible to pay resident tuition.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Higher Education):

(In support) This proposal requires that veterans establish Washington as their intended domicile. Veterans should be able to compete for in-state tuition slots. Veterans' benefits will only support in-state tuition. Veterans play a strong role in our student community and serve as student leaders. There is a flaw in the system that is fixed by this proposal because military service members often have to move multiple times, and establishing residency is tricky. Adoption of this proposal would go a long way to relieving many of the talent vacancies in the workforce. This is also an economic issue as veterans have an exemplary work ethic and can fill jobs in the workforce.

(Opposed) None.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Appropriations Subcommittee on Education):

(In support) We have an obligation to the young men and women who have given up their time to serve our country. This bill provides veterans with greater accessibility to higher education. Nineteen states are already offering similar programs. Washington has the seventh largest presence of veterans in the county. We are asking to have veterans compete for existing resident slots; they are not replacing Washington residents. We believe the costs in the fiscal note are overstated. Service members play an important role on the school campus. We have seen the number of veterans on the school campus increase by 28 percent. These are our student leaders. They come with workforce skills and bring diverse perspective to the classroom. There is currently a system flaw. If you are enrolled in higher education as an active duty member of the military you pay resident tuition. Once you are no longer an active duty member of the military you are required to pay nonresident tuition. This negatively affects many families. Passing a law like this would incentivize veterans to

come back to Washington to settle and attend universities. This contributes to the state economy.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying (Higher Education): Mark San Souci, Department of Defense State Liaison Office; Jim Sims, Veterans Legislative Coalition; E.B. Vodde, Jaclyn Sperlich, and Gabriel Bowman, Washington Student Association; Scott Copeland, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Angela Foster, Veteran Corps; and Eric Lint.

Persons Testifying (Appropriations Subcommittee on Education): Representative Appleton, prime sponsor; Mark San Souci, U. S. Department of Defense; Jaclyn Sperlich, Associated Students of Central Washington University; Gabriel Bowman, Associated Students of University of Washington-Tacoma; and Tristan Hanon, Associated Students of Washington State University.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Higher Education): None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Appropriations Subcommittee on Education): None.