
HOUSE BILL 1878

State of Washington 63rd Legislature 2013 Regular Session

By Representatives Halpern, Seaquist, Zeiger, Buys, O'Ban, and Pollet

Read first time 02/13/13. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to restoring state need grant award amounts for
2 students at private, nonprofit degree-granting institutions; amending
3 RCW 28B.92.060; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds and reaffirms that
6 the state need grant program was based on the principle that the
7 funding follows resident students to their choice of institution of
8 higher education, recognizing that state need grant appropriations
9 constitute funding for students, not for institutions of higher
10 education. The legislature reaffirms that the primary purpose of the
11 program is to assist low-income, needy, and disadvantaged Washington
12 residents attending institutions of higher education.

13 (2) The legislature further finds that private nonprofit colleges
14 and universities provide access to higher education for thousands of
15 low-income Washington residents from every corner of the state at a
16 comparatively low cost to the state, and that by providing such access
17 these institutions of higher education help the state efficiently work
18 toward the goals of increasing college degree production and overall
19 educational attainment levels for Washington residents.

1 (3) The legislature further finds that state policy in place for
2 more than a decade before 2011, under which students attending private
3 nonprofit baccalaureate degree-granting institutions received state
4 need grant award amounts linked with award amounts for students
5 attending public research institutions, was discontinued in the 2011-
6 2013 omnibus appropriations act, resulting in twenty-two percent lower
7 awards for students at private nonprofit baccalaureate degree granting
8 institutions of higher education in relation to students attending
9 public research institutions in the 2012-13 academic year. It is the
10 intent of the legislature to restore equity for students attending
11 private nonprofit baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.

12 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.92.060 and 2012 c 229 s 558 are each amended to
13 read as follows:

14 In awarding need grants, the office shall proceed substantially as
15 follows: PROVIDED, That nothing contained herein shall be construed to
16 prevent the office, in the exercise of its sound discretion, from
17 following another procedure when the best interest of the program so
18 dictates:

19 (1) The office shall annually select the financial aid award
20 recipients from among Washington residents applying for student
21 financial aid who have been ranked according to:

22 (a) Financial need as determined by the amount of the family
23 contribution; and

24 (b) Other considerations, such as whether the student is a former
25 foster youth, or is a placebound student who has completed an associate
26 of arts or associate of science degree or its equivalent.

27 (2) The financial need of the highest ranked students shall be met
28 by grants depending upon the evaluation of financial need until the
29 total allocation has been disbursed. Funds from grants which are
30 declined, forfeited or otherwise unused shall be reawarded until
31 disbursed, except that eligible former foster youth shall be assured
32 receipt of a grant. The office, in consultation with four-year
33 institutions of higher education, the council, and the state board for
34 community and technical colleges, shall develop award criteria and
35 methods of disbursement based on level of need, and not solely rely on
36 a first-come, first-served basis.

1 (3) A student shall be eligible to receive a state need grant for
2 up to five years, or the credit or clock hour equivalent of five years,
3 or up to one hundred twenty-five percent of the published length of
4 time of the student's program. A student may not start a new associate
5 degree program as a state need grant recipient until at least five
6 years have elapsed since earning an associate degree as a need grant
7 recipient, except that a student may earn two associate degrees
8 concurrently. Qualifications for renewal will include maintaining
9 satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible program
10 as determined by the office. Should the recipient terminate his or her
11 enrollment for any reason during the academic year, the unused portion
12 of the grant shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by
13 the institution according to the institution's own policy for issuing
14 refunds, except as provided in RCW 28B.92.070.

15 (4) In computing financial need, the office shall determine a
16 maximum student expense budget allowance, not to exceed an amount equal
17 to the total maximum student expense budget at the public institutions
18 plus the current average state appropriation per student for operating
19 expense in the public institutions. Any child support payments
20 received by students who are parents attending less than half-time
21 shall not be used in computing financial need.

22 (5) Grant awards for students at private nonprofit baccalaureate
23 degree-granting institutions participating in the state need grant
24 program must be set at the same level as the student would receive if
25 attending one of the public research universities.

26 (6)(a) A student who is enrolled in three to six credit-bearing
27 quarter credits, or the equivalent semester credits, may receive a
28 grant for up to one academic year before beginning a program that leads
29 to a degree or certificate.

30 (b) An eligible student enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis
31 shall receive a prorated portion of his or her state need grant for any
32 academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a less-than-full-time
33 basis, as long as funds are available.

34 (c) An institution of higher education may award a state need grant
35 to an eligible student enrolled in three to six credit-bearing quarter
36 credits, or the semester equivalent, on a provisional basis if:

37 (i) The student has not previously received a state need grant from
38 that institution;

1 (ii) The student completes the required free application for
2 federal student aid;

3 (iii) The institution has reviewed the student's financial
4 condition, and the financial condition of the student's family if the
5 student is a dependent student, and has determined that the student is
6 likely eligible for a state need grant; and

7 (iv) The student has signed a document attesting to the fact that
8 the financial information provided on the free application for federal
9 student aid and any additional financial information provided directly
10 to the institution is accurate and complete, and that the student
11 agrees to repay the institution for the grant amount if the student
12 submitted false or incomplete information.

13 ((+6+)) (7) As used in this section, "former foster youth" means a
14 person who is at least eighteen years of age, but not more than twenty-
15 four years of age, who was a dependent of the department of social and
16 health services at the time he or she attained the age of eighteen.

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