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SENATE BILL 5673

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State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Frockt, Murray, Hasegawa, Chase, Conway, Shin, Fraser, Ranker, Harper, McAuliffe, and Rolfes

Read first time 02/07/13. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a two-year freeze on tuition rates at  
2 community and technical colleges; reenacting and amending RCW  
3 28B.15.067; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1)(a) The legislature finds that  
6 Washington's public community and technical college system was founded  
7 with a strong public mission of offering an open door to every  
8 Washingtonian, regardless of his or her academic background or  
9 experiences, at a cost normally within his or her economic means. The  
10 legislature also finds that the thirty-four community and technical  
11 colleges located across the state of Washington serve a critical role  
12 in maintaining broad access to career training opportunities, academic  
13 coursework to prepare students for college transfer, and basic skills  
14 education for individuals who need extra assistance in preparing for  
15 the workforce or college-level coursework.

16 (b) The legislature finds that the state's declining investment in  
17 its public community and technical colleges has increasingly shifted  
18 the burden of the costs of college attendance to Washington students  
19 and families. The legislature recognizes that in 1991, when the

1 current community and technical college system was established, the  
2 state's share of the two-year college system's budget averaged eighty-  
3 seven percent. Today, the state's share has dropped to sixty-five  
4 percent.

5 (2) It is the intent of the legislature to preserve broad access to  
6 high quality postsecondary education opportunities throughout the state  
7 of Washington and to begin to restore the funding balance between  
8 students and the state.

9 (3) Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to freeze  
10 tuition increases for students attending Washington's thirty-four  
11 public community and technical colleges for the 2013-2015 biennium,  
12 provided that no less than one hundred eighty-eight million dollars be  
13 appropriated to the state board for community and technical colleges,  
14 for the purpose of off-setting revenue that would otherwise be obtained  
15 by scheduled tuition increases.

16 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.15.067 and 2012 2nd sp.s. c 7 s 914 and 2012 c 228  
17 s 6 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

18 (1) Tuition fees shall be established under the provisions of this  
19 chapter.

20 (2) Beginning in the 2011-12 academic year, reductions or increases  
21 in full-time tuition fees shall be as provided in the omnibus  
22 appropriations act for resident undergraduate students at community and  
23 technical colleges and for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years, if  
24 after accounting for maintenance-level appropriations the sum of one  
25 hundred eighty-eight million dollars is appropriated to the state board  
26 for community and technical colleges from the general fund in the 2013-  
27 2015 omnibus appropriations act, full-time tuition fees for resident  
28 undergraduates shall not exceed its 2012-13 academic year resident  
29 undergraduate tuition levels. The governing boards of the state  
30 universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College;  
31 and the state board for community and technical colleges may reduce or  
32 increase full-time tuition fees for all students other than resident  
33 undergraduates, including nonresident students, summer school students,  
34 and students in other self-supporting degree programs. Percentage  
35 increases in full-time tuition may exceed the fiscal growth factor.  
36 Except during the 2011-2013 fiscal biennium, the state board for

1 community and technical colleges may pilot or institute differential  
2 tuition models. The board may define scale, scope, and rationale for  
3 the models.

4 (3)(a) Beginning with the 2011-12 academic year and through the end  
5 of the 2014-15 academic year, the governing boards of the state  
6 universities, the regional universities, and The Evergreen State  
7 College may reduce or increase full-time tuition fees for all students,  
8 including summer school students and students in other self-supporting  
9 degree programs. Percentage increases in full-time tuition fees may  
10 exceed the fiscal growth factor. Reductions or increases may be made  
11 for all or portions of an institution's programs, campuses, courses, or  
12 students; however, during the 2011-2013 fiscal biennium, reductions or  
13 increases in tuition must be uniform among resident undergraduate  
14 students.

15 (b) Prior to reducing or increasing tuition for each academic year,  
16 the governing boards of the state universities, the regional  
17 universities, and The Evergreen State College shall consult with  
18 existing student associations or organizations with student  
19 undergraduate and graduate representatives regarding the impacts of  
20 potential tuition increases. Each governing board shall make public  
21 its proposal for tuition and fee increases twenty-one days before the  
22 governing board of the institution considers adoption and allow  
23 opportunity for public comment. However, the requirement to make  
24 public a proposal for tuition and fee increases twenty-one days before  
25 the governing board considers adoption shall not apply if the omnibus  
26 appropriations act has not passed the legislature by May 15th.  
27 Governing boards shall be required to provide data regarding the  
28 percentage of students receiving financial aid, the sources of aid, and  
29 the percentage of total costs of attendance paid for by aid.

30 (c) Prior to reducing or increasing tuition for each academic year,  
31 the state board for community and technical college system shall  
32 consult with existing student associations or organizations with  
33 undergraduate student representation regarding the impacts of potential  
34 tuition increases. The state board for community and technical  
35 colleges shall provide data regarding the percentage of students  
36 receiving financial aid, the sources of aid, and the percentage of  
37 total costs of attendance paid for by aid.

1 (4) Beginning with the 2015-16 academic year through the 2018-19  
2 academic year, the governing boards of the state universities, regional  
3 universities, and The Evergreen State College may set tuition for  
4 resident undergraduates as follows:

5 (a) If state funding for a college or university falls below the  
6 state funding provided in the operating budget for fiscal year 2011,  
7 the governing board may increase tuition up to the limits set in (d) of  
8 this subsection, reduce enrollments, or both;

9 (b) If state funding for a college or university is at least at the  
10 level of state funding provided in the operating budget for fiscal year  
11 2011, the governing board may increase tuition up to the limits set in  
12 (d) of this subsection and shall continue to at least maintain the  
13 actual enrollment levels for fiscal year 2011 or increase enrollments  
14 as required in the omnibus appropriations act;

15 (c) If state funding is increased so that combined with resident  
16 undergraduate tuition the sixtieth percentile of the total per-student  
17 funding at similar public institutions of higher education in the  
18 global challenge states under RCW 28B.15.068 is exceeded, the governing  
19 board shall decrease tuition by the amount needed for the total per-  
20 student funding to be at the sixtieth percentile under RCW 28B.15.068;  
21 and

22 (d) The amount of tuition set by the governing board for an  
23 institution under this subsection (4) may not exceed the sixtieth  
24 percentile of the resident undergraduate tuition of similar public  
25 institutions of higher education in the global challenge states.

26 (5) The tuition fees established under this chapter shall not apply  
27 to high school students enrolling in participating institutions of  
28 higher education under RCW 28A.600.300 through 28A.600.400.

29 (6) The tuition fees established under this chapter shall not apply  
30 to eligible students enrolling in a dropout reengagement program  
31 through an interlocal agreement between a school district and a  
32 community or technical college under RCW 28A.175.100 through  
33 28A.175.110.

34 (7) The tuition fees established under this chapter shall not apply  
35 to eligible students enrolling in a community or technical college  
36 participating in the pilot program under RCW 28B.50.534 for the purpose  
37 of obtaining a high school diploma.

1           (8) Beginning in the 2019-20 academic year, reductions or increases  
2 in full-time tuition fees for resident undergraduates at four-year  
3 institutions of higher education shall be as provided in the omnibus  
4 appropriations act.

5           (9) The legislative advisory committee to the committee on advanced  
6 tuition payment established in RCW 28B.95.170 shall:

7           (a) Review the impact of differential tuition rates on the funded  
8 status and future unit price of the Washington advanced college tuition  
9 payment program; and

10           (b) No later than January 14, 2013, make a recommendation to the  
11 appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the legislature regarding  
12 how differential tuition should be addressed in order to maintain the  
13 ongoing solvency of the Washington advanced college tuition payment  
14 program.

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