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## Higher Education Committee

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### HB 1592

**Brief Description:** Concerning tuition waivers for state and educational employees.

**Sponsors:** Representatives S. Hunt, Sells, Hayes, Bergquist, Santos, Pollet, Sullivan, Moscoso and Wylie.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adds K-12 classified staff to the list of state and educational employees eligible to receive tuition and fee waivers at Washington's public institutions of higher education if the waiver is used for coursework relevant to their work assignment.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 2/6/15

**Staff:** Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

**Background:**

There are two categories of tuition waivers: state supported and discretionary waivers. State supported waivers are those that require the institutions to waive tuition and fees for a certain category of people. Some of these groups of people include those persons and their children who were wrongly convicted of a crime, recipients of the Washington Scholars Award, or children and surviving spouses of law enforcement officers, firefighters, or Washington state patrol officers who lost their lives or became totally disabled in the line of duty.

Some tuition and fee waivers are allowed under statute, but not required. For example, the institutions may waive a portion or all of tuition and fees for eligible veterans and National Guard members, students of foreign nations, or for Washington residents sixty years of age or older. However, the institutions are limited in their tuition and fee waiver authority in that the total amount of tuition and fee revenue waived, exempted, or reduced may not exceed a percentage of their estimated gross operating fee revenue. The institutions are allowed to waive up to a certain portion of their total operating fee revenue, but they are not required to. The institutions' percentage caps are as follows:

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- University of Washington 21 percent;
- Washington State University is 20 percent;
- Eastern Washington University is 11 percent;
- Central Washington University is 10 percent;
- Western Washington University is 10 percent;
- The Evergreen State College is 10 percent; and
- community colleges as a whole are 35 percent.

Discretionary waivers allow the institutions to waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for any reason outside of those authorized by the state. These discretionary waivers are not covered under the waiver percentage caps, but they are also not state supported. This means that the institutions cannot expect additional state money to backfill forgone tuition revenue.

Another type of state supported waiver that is not required, but optional, is for state and educational employees. To be eligible for the waiver, a state employee is considered someone who is:

- employed half-time or more as a permanent employee in classified service under the State Civil Service Law;
- a permanent employee governed under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Agreement; or
- a faculty, counselor, librarian, or exempt professional or administrative employee at an institution of higher education.

The waiver is also available for teachers and other certified instructional staff employed at public common and vocational schools that are holding, or seeking, a valid endorsement and assigned in a state-identified shortage area.

**Summary of Bill:**

K-12 classified staff employed at public common and vocational schools are eligible for a full or partial tuition, service, and activity fee waiver at the public institutions of higher education when the waiver is used for coursework relevant to their work assignment.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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