

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1961

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to decodifying, expiring, and making nonsubstantive changes to community and technical college provisions.

Brief Description: Decodifying, expiring, and making nonsubstantive changes to community and technical college provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Zeiger, Reykdal and Sells; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/17/15, 2/18/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides expiration dates and clarifications for certain higher education provisions and programs.
- Decodifies certain statutes pertaining to general obligation bonds that were issued for higher education capital projects and that have matured.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Gregory, Hargrove, Holy, Reykdal, Sells, Stambaugh, Tarleton and Van Werven.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

The Displaced Homemaker Program.

The Displaced Homemaker Act of 1979 expanded services to displaced homemakers provided through the federal government program. The purpose was to establish guidelines for the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges related to training, counseling,

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and providing services to displaced homemakers. The program has not been funded since 2011.

The Project Even Start Program.

Project Even Start (Even Start) was established to help facilitate the expansion of services provided through the federal Even Start Family Literacy Program that was first authorized in 1988 to provide literacy and basic skills training to parents through community and technical colleges. A central purpose of the Even Start was to enable parents to assist their own children to gain literacy skills. The Even Start does not receive funding from the state.

The Educational Assistance Grant Program.

The Educational Assistance Grant Program was created in 2003 for students with dependents subject to the availability of receipts of gifts, grants, or endowments from private sources. Since 2003 no gifts, grants, or endowments have been provided for this purpose.

Technical College Districts and Boards.

The Community and Technical College Act of 1991 transferred vocational-technical institutes, now known as technical colleges, from the common school system to the higher education system. State law provides direction for the use of shared facilities between vocational-technical institutes and common schools until such a time as one of the programs could be removed from the facility. Direction was also provided assigning certain vested interests to either school district boards or technical college boards.

State law specifies names, districts, and membership for boards of trustees for each vocational-technical institute (technical college). Districts and membership for boards of trustees are also provided in statutes pertaining to both community colleges and technical colleges.

The High School Completion Pilot Program.

Legislation enacted in 2007 created a pilot program for two community or technical colleges to make courses or a program of study available, on the college campus, designed to enable students under the age of 21 who have completed all state and local high school graduation requirements, except the certificate of academic achievement or certificate of individual achievement, to complete their high school education and obtain a high school diploma.

The Washington Scholars Program.

The Washington Scholars Program recognizes the accomplishments of four high school seniors from each of the state's 49 legislative districts. Eligible students must be nominated by their school principal and rank in the top 1 percent of their graduating senior class to receive state scholarships for up to four years. The scholarships can be used at any of Washington's public or private colleges or universities. Funding for the program was suspended in the 2011-13 Operating Budget, though scholars selected in earlier years continue to receive their awards. In the 2011-13 biennium, recipients received honorary recognition-only certificates.

General Obligation Bonds.

Washington periodically issues general obligation bonds to finance projects authorized in the capital budget, including higher education facilities. General obligation bonds pledge the full

faith, credit, and taxing power of the state towards payment of debt service. Legislation authorizing the issuance of bonds requires a 60-percent majority vote in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Bond authorization legislation generally specifies the account or accounts into which bond sale proceeds are deposited, as well as the source of debt service payments. When debt service payments are due, the State Treasurer (Treasurer) withdraws the amounts necessary to make the payments from the State General Fund and deposits them into bond retirement funds. The State Finance Committee, composed of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Treasurer, is responsible for supervising and controlling the issuance of all state bonds. General obligation bonds are typically issued with 25-year maturities.

Summary of Bill:

Certain statutes pertaining to general obligation bonds that were issued for higher education capital projects that have matured are decodified.

An expiration date of August 1, 2015, is provided for the following provisions:

- the Displaced Homemaker Act;
- the Project Even Start program;
- certain statutes for technical colleges and Seattle Vocational Institution to collect tuition and fees per their standard operating procedure;
- the Educational Assistance Grant;
- the naming of vocational-technical institutes, their districts, and providing for boards of trustees;
- certain statutes pertaining to the transfer of vocational-technical institutes from the common school system to the higher education system;
- the Opportunity Express website; and
- the High School Completion Pilot program.

Authorization of tuition waivers for recipients of the Washington Scholars Program scholarship pertaining to the period prior to 1994 are removed.

A technical clarification is made to certain statutes to add the term "technical college" to references to "community college" throughout the title.

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:

(In support) This is a technical clean-up bill that should pass. It removes provisions that transferred the technical schools from the K-12 system to the college system. This is a good government clean-up bill that allows the community and technical college system to focus on providing services to students.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Zeiger, prime sponsor; and Alison Grazzini, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.