
Higher Education Committee

HB 1033

Brief Description: Expanding access to the state need grant by modifying awards for students attending private four-year institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Representatives Manweller, Hargrove, Haler, Buys and Muri.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Reduces the State Need Grant (SNG) award for students attending private four-year institutions of higher education to no greater than the SNG award students attending the lowest priced public four-year institution of higher education receive.

Hearing Date: 1/17/17

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

The State Need Grant (SNG) is the state's largest financial aid program that provides a need-based grant award for students to attend a postsecondary institution. To be eligible for the program, a student must:

- be a Washington state resident;
- attend an eligible institution of higher education and maintain satisfactory academic progress;
- enroll with a minimum of three credits as an undergraduate student;
- be pursuing a first bachelor's degree, a certificate, or a first associate degree in any field excluding theology; and
- not owe repayment to another student aid program.

To receive a grant, the eligible student's family income must be less than 70 percent of the state's median family income (MFI). If the eligible student's family income falls below 50 percent of the state's MFI, the student is eligible to receive the maximum state need grant award. If the student's family income is between 50 and 70 percent of the state's MFI, the award amount is

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prorated based on family income. In 2016-17 the state's 70 percent MFI cutoff amount for a family of four was \$59,500.

The student may receive a grant award to attend any eligible post secondary institution in the state. Currently, there are 66 post secondary institutions that are authorized to participate in the SNG program. The SNG awards vary based on the type of institution a student chooses to attend. The 2016-17 award amounts by institution are listed below:

2016-17 State Need Grant Maximum Award Amounts By Institution	
Washington State University	\$9,369
University of Washington	\$9,348
Western Washington University	\$6,495
Central Washington University	\$6,293
The Evergreen State College	\$6,268
Eastern Washington University	\$5,947
Community and Technical College Applied Bachelor's Degree Programs	\$5,947
Private Four-Year Universities and Colleges	\$8,517
Western Governor's University-WA	\$5,619
Public Community and Technical Colleges	\$3,541
Private, Proprietary Colleges	\$2,823

In 2015-16 around 69,000 students received a SNG award, and over 24,000 students who were SNG eligible did not receive an award due to funding constraints. The majority of SNG recipients attend public institutions of higher education. For fiscal year 2017, around 5 percent of SNG recipients were attending private four-year universities and colleges.

Summary of Bill:

Beginning in the 2018-19 academic year, students eligible for the SNG who enroll in a private four-year institution of higher education may not receive an award higher than the base grant award amount a student attending the least expensive public four-year institution of higher education would receive.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 01/09/2017.

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