

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## E2SHB 2009

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Higher Education & Workforce Development, February 22, 2018

**Title:** An act relating to providing higher education support for gold star families.

**Brief Description:** Providing higher education support for gold star families.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Reeves, Stonier, Riccelli, Peterson, Doglio, Jenkins, Kilduff, Lovick, Tarleton, McBride, Ormsby, Stanford, Orwall, Muri, Slatter, Ryu and Fey).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/03/17, 97-0; 2/08/18, 98-0.

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/15/18, 2/22/18 [DPA-WM].

### Brief Summary of Amended Bill

- Provides a \$250 annual textbook stipend to children and spouses receiving a tuition waiver because their parent or spouse passed away, became totally disabled, or is considered a prisoner of war or missing in action due to active military service.

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Ranker, Chair; Palumbo, Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Carlyle, Liias, Miloscia, Nelson and Short.

**Staff:** Alicia Kinne-Clawson (786-7407)

**Background:** State law requires and authorizes public institutions of higher education to grant various tuition and fee waivers. 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.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The public institutions of higher education are required to waive undergraduate tuition and fees for children and spouses of an eligible veteran or National Guard member, who as a result of serving:

- lost their life;
- became totally disabled; or
- is considered a prisoner of war (POW) or missing in action (MIA).

In order to be eligible for the tuition waiver, a child must be domiciled in Washington and be between the ages of 17 and 26. The spouse or domestic partner must be a Washington domiciliary, not have remarried or entered into another domestic partnership, and must use the tuition waiver within ten years of the date of death, disability, or determination of POW or MIA status.

The child or spouse may receive a tuition waiver until they have earned 200 quarter credits, or the equivalent of semester credits.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** Subject to amounts appropriated, a \$250 annual stipend for textbooks and course materials is provided to children and spouses receiving tuition waivers received because the recipient's spouse or parent lost their life, became totally disabled, or is considered a POW or MIA due to serving in active duty military or the National Guard.

#### **EFFECT OF HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AMENDMENT(S):**

- Modifies annual stipend amount to \$250 and makes it subject to appropriations.
- Clarifies that the stipend may be prorated for part-time enrollment.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony Second Engrossed Substitute House Bill:** *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: The bill provides a small textbook stipend that helps alleviate the burden of higher education costs for gold star families. As a veteran, Washington does an admirable job supporting other veterans and their families. We would like to open the conversation about whether or not the stipend in this bill is available for part time enrollment and is scalable. We request that the Legislature keep in mind appropriations for the purpose of this bill.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Kristine Reeves, Prime Sponsor; Jerry Fugich, Veterans Legislative Coalition; Ruben Flores, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.