

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5603

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As Passed Senate, February 20, 2019

**Title:** An act relating to enrollment and course registration access for children of military families.

**Brief Description:** Concerning enrollment and course registration access for children of military families.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Randall, Wilson, C., Rolfes, O'Ban, Conway, Cleveland, Das, Zeiger, Hobbs, Kuderer and Nguyen).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/08/19, 2/12/19 [DPS].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed Senate: 2/20/19, 47-0.

**Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill**

- Provides that children of military families will comply with school district residency requirements if their parent is transferred or pending transfer to a military installation in the state while on active military duty.
- Requires school districts to conditionally accept applications for enrollment and course registration by electronic means in such circumstances.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5603 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Holy, Hunt, McCoy, Mullet, Padden, Pedersen, Salomon and Wagoner.

**Staff:** Alex Fairfortune (786-7416)

**Background:** The Legislature enacted the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children in 2009 to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children

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of military families due to frequent moves and deployment of their parents. One stated purpose of the compact is facilitating the timely enrollment of children of military families and ensuring they are not placed at a disadvantage due to difficulty from transferring education records or variations in entrance and age requirements. The compact does not address residency requirements.

Proof of residency shows that a student lives within the service area of a school district. Each school district decides what proof of residency it will accept, such as a rental agreement, utility bill, or driver's license. If a child has no regular, fixed address, but lives within the school district in a temporary shelter, institution, or place not ordinarily used as a residence, the school district may accept an alternative form of address it considers appropriate.

**Summary of First Substitute Bill:** Children of military families will comply with the residency requirements in a school district if their parent is transferred, or pending transfer, to a military installation in the state while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order. In such circumstances, the school district must conditionally accept applications for enrollment and course registration by electronic means. The child's parent must provide proof of residency in the school district within fourteen days of published arrival, as provided on official documentation, before enrollment is finalized. Addresses for temporary on-base billeting facilities, off-base military housing, or a purchased or leased home may be used to prove residency.

**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 on First Substitute :** PRO: The military makes communities rich and diverse. This bill makes it clear that no matter how you come to the community, the path is clear for you. Approximately 185,000 military children move between K-12 schools annually, and those children are at risk of missing their registration dates because they may not make it to school on time. This leads to missing necessary Advanced Placement and honors classes or specialized coursework that they may want or need. The intent is not to offer an advantage or priority, but just to let students register at the same time as their peers. This can be completed with a phone call or email so additional technology isn't necessary. Currently, school districts have to scramble to figure out which students are coming and going, and which students are assigned to which teachers. This will help school districts estimate their student population and relieve unneeded stress. The bill is bipartisan and has been written in conjunction with the Department of Defense and Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Emily Randall, Prime Sponsor; Tammie Perreault, Department of Defense.

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