

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5800

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As of February 8, 2019

**Title:** An act relating to the helping homeless college students act.

**Brief Description:** Concerning homeless college students.

**Sponsors:** Senators Randall, Zeiger, Nguyen, Wilson, C., Saldaña, Carlyle, Keiser, Sheldon, Das, Hasegawa and Kuderer.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/07/19.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes pilot programs at certain public baccalaureates and college districts to assist students experiencing homelessness and students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Staff:** Kellee Gunn (786-7429)

**Background:** Public Baccalaureate Institutions. There are six public, four-year colleges and universities in Washington State. Of the six four-year institutions, four are regional comprehensive colleges and universities including The Evergreen State College, Western Washington University, Central Washington University, and Eastern Washington University. The other two, University of Washington and Washington State University, are research institutions.

Public and Community Technical Colleges. There are 34 public and community technical college (CTCs) districts in Washington State. Each public college and CTC must maintain an open-door policy, which states admission cannot be denied because of the location of a student's residence, or because of the student's educational background or ability.

**Summary of Bill:** The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges must select four college districts, two on each side of the crest of the Cascade Mountain range, to participate

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in a pilot program to assist students experiencing homelessness and students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school (program-eligible students). Similarly, the Washington Student Achievement Council must select two public baccalaureate institutions, one on each side of the crest of the Cascade Mountain range, to participate in a corresponding pilot program.

The college districts and public baccalaureate institutions chosen to participate in the pilot program must provide certain accommodations to students including, but not limited to:

- access to laundry facilities;
- access to storage;
- access to locker room and shower facilities;
- reduced-price meals or meal plans, and access to food banks;
- access to technology;
- access to short-term housing or housing assistance, especially during seasonal breaks; and
- case management services.

College districts and public baccalaureate institutions participating in the pilot program may also establish and provide plans to develop surplus property for affordable housing to accommodate the needs of program-eligible students.

The pilot program expires July 1, 2023.

The college districts and public baccalaureate institutions participating in the pilot program must each provide joint reports, one from the CTCs and another from the public baccalaureate institutions, to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2023. The reports must include:

- the total number of program-eligible students attending during the pilot program;
- the number of program-eligible students assisted by the pilot program;
- strategies for accommodating students experiencing homelessness and former foster care students; and
- legislative recommendations for how students experiencing homelessness and former foster care students could be better served.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 1, 2019.

**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:** PRO: As a state we have committed to finding pathways for all students to get an education. Once students get to college however, they lose the supports they have had access to in K-12. This looks at ways to accommodate the most vulnerable students. Pilot projects help us identify what the issues are, what is working, and what can be improved before a program like this becomes law.

OTHER: Please consider current programs in existence at these institutions when developing these pilot programs.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Emily Randall, Prime Sponsor; Arlen Harris, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges; Dr. Timothy Stokes, President, South Sound Community College; Dani Trimble, Lower Columbia Community College; Charles Adkins, Director of Legislative Affairs, Geoduck Student Union.

OTHER: Cody Eccles, Council of Presidents.

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