
HOUSE BILL 2254

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Representatives Gildon and Van Werven

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1 AN ACT Relating to encouraging Washington college grant
2 recipients to pursue high demand degrees; amending RCW 28B.92.200 and
3 28B.92.030; amending 2019 c 406 s 18 (uncodified); and adding new
4 sections to chapter 28B.92 RCW.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.92.200 and 2019 c 406 s 19 are each amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (1) The Washington college grant program is created to provide a
9 statewide ((free)) taxpayer-funded college program for eligible
10 participants and greater access to postsecondary education for
11 Washington residents. The Washington college grant program is
12 intended to increase the number of high school graduates and adults
13 that can attain a postsecondary credential and provide them with the
14 qualifications needed to compete for job opportunities in Washington.

15 (2) The office shall implement and administer the Washington
16 college grant program and is authorized to establish rules necessary
17 for implementation of the program.

18 (3) The legislature shall appropriate funding for the Washington
19 college grant program. Allocations must be made on the basis of
20 estimated eligible participants enrolled in eligible institutions of
21 higher education or apprenticeship programs. All eligible students

1 are entitled to a Washington college grant beginning in academic year
2 2020-21.

3 (4) The office shall award Washington college grants to all
4 eligible students beginning in academic year 2020-21.

5 (5) To be eligible for the Washington college grant, students
6 must meet the following requirements:

7 (a) Demonstrate financial need under RCW 28B.92.205;

8 (b) (i) Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment for at least three
9 quarter credits or the equivalent semester credits at an institution
10 of higher education in Washington as defined in RCW 28B.92.030; or

11 (ii) Be enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program approved
12 under chapter 49.04 RCW;

13 (c) Be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a)
14 through (e);

15 (d) File an annual application for financial aid as approved by
16 the office; and

17 (e) Must not have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher from a
18 postsecondary institution.

19 (6) Washington college grant eligibility may not extend beyond
20 five years or one hundred twenty-five percent of the published length
21 of the program in which the student is enrolled or the credit or
22 clock-hour equivalent.

23 (7) Institutional aid administrators shall determine whether a
24 student eligible for the Washington college grant in a given academic
25 year may remain eligible for the ensuing year if the student's family
26 income increases by no more than three percent.

27 (8) Qualifications for receipt and renewal include maintaining
28 satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible
29 program as determined by the office and established in rule.

30 (9) Should a recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any
31 reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant
32 shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by the
33 institution of higher education according to the institution of
34 higher education's policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in
35 RCW 28B.92.070.

36 (10) An eligible student enrolled on a part-time basis shall
37 receive a prorated portion of the Washington college grant for any
38 academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a part-time basis.

39 (11) The Washington college grant is intended to be used to meet
40 the costs of postsecondary education for students with financial

1 need. The student shall be awarded all need-based financial aid for
2 which the student qualifies as determined by the institution.

3 (12) Students and participating institutions of higher education
4 shall comply with all the rules adopted by the council for the
5 administration of this chapter.

6 **Sec. 2.** 2019 c 406 s 18 (uncodified) is amended to read as
7 follows:

8 (1) The legislature finds that individuals with a postsecondary
9 credential have a greater chance of earning a wage that can support
10 themselves and their families than if they do not obtain a
11 postsecondary credential. At the same time, Washington employers are
12 in need of many more individuals who possess postsecondary
13 qualifications. Access to postsecondary opportunities are vital to
14 ensure that more Washington high school graduates and working adults
15 can enter and complete a postsecondary program and compete for the
16 job opportunities available in the state.

17 (2) The legislature further finds that a (~~statewide-free~~)
18 taxpayer-funded college program, for students who demonstrate
19 financial need as defined in (~~section 20 of this act~~) RCW
20 28B.92.205, and for baccalaureate students enrolled in a high demand
21 program, as defined in RCW 28B.92.030, is necessary to significantly
22 reduce the financial costs of obtaining a postsecondary credential.
23 The Washington college grant program is intended to increase access
24 to postsecondary opportunities for Washington residents.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.92
26 RCW to read as follows:

27 (1) In addition to other eligibility requirements outlined in
28 this chapter, students enrolled in a baccalaureate program who
29 receive the Washington college grant during their academic terms of
30 junior and senior standing must sign a contract acknowledging that
31 unless the student is enrolled in a high demand program, the student
32 incurs an obligation to repay all Washington college grant funding
33 received during those years.

34 (2) The workforce education investment accountability and
35 oversight board established in RCW 28C.18.200, in consultation with
36 the council and the workforce training and education coordinating
37 board, shall determine every four years which undergraduate programs
38 qualify as high demand programs as defined in RCW 28B.92.030. The

1 council must maintain a list on its web site of the high demand
2 programs that qualify and make the list readily available to
3 Washington college grant recipients.

4 (3) A Washington college grant recipient who is not enrolled in a
5 high demand program incurs an obligation to repay all grant funding
6 received during academic terms of junior and senior standing
7 beginning six months after graduation or six months after
8 discontinuing enrollment at an institution.

9 (4) The council shall convert the Washington college grants of
10 recipients who are not enrolled in high demand programs to zero
11 percent interest student loans and has the following duties:

12 (a) Collaborate with institutions of higher education to verify
13 which Washington college grant recipients are enrolled in high demand
14 programs;

15 (b) Define the terms of repayment, with a maximum repayment term
16 of no more than ten years;

17 (c) Collect repayments, including exercising due diligence in
18 such collection and servicing of repayments and, if necessary,
19 collection must be pursued using the full extent of the law,
20 including wage garnishment;

21 (d) Maintain all necessary records;

22 (e) Establish an appeals process for recipients who believe there
23 is an unresolved error in the servicing of their loan;

24 (f) Establish rules for deferring repayment, such as for pursuing
25 a graduate or professional degree, and for forbearance, such as for
26 economic or medical hardship; and

27 (g) Establish rules for discharging a student's loan in the event
28 of total disability or death.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.92
30 RCW to read as follows:

31 (1) The Washington college grant loan repayment account is
32 created in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from
33 section 3 of this act must be deposited in the account. Expenditures
34 from the account may be used for administration and loan collection
35 under the Washington college grant program but may not exceed fifteen
36 percent of the total receipts. Only the director of the student
37 achievement council or the director's designee may authorize
38 expenditures from the account. The account is subject to the
39 allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is

1 not required for expenditures related to administration and loan
2 collection.

3 (2) When any remaining funds in the Washington college grant loan
4 repayment account accrue sufficient funding to reduce or prevent an
5 increase in the cost of tuition by at least one percent, those funds
6 must be transferred to the institutions of higher education operating
7 fees account. These transferred funds must be used to reduce or
8 prevent an increase in the cost of tuition at public institutions of
9 higher education.

10 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28B.92.030 and 2019 c 406 s 21 are each amended to
11 read as follows:

12 As used in this chapter:

13 (1) "Council" means the student achievement council.

14 (2) "Financial aid" means either loans, grants, or both, to
15 students who demonstrate financial need enrolled or accepted for
16 enrollment as a student at institutions of higher education.

17 (3) "Financial need" means a demonstrated financial inability to
18 bear the total cost of education as directed in rule by the office.

19 (4) "High demand program" means a baccalaureate degree program in
20 which the projected employment demand exceeds the number of students
21 per year prepared for employment from in-state programs in that
22 career field by ten percent or more.

23 (5) "Institution" or "institutions of higher education" means:

24 (a) Any public university, college, community college, or
25 technical college operated by the state of Washington or any
26 political subdivision thereof; or

27 (b) Any other university, college, school, or institute in the
28 state of Washington offering instruction beyond the high school level
29 that is a member institution of an accrediting association recognized
30 by rule of the council for the purposes of this section and that
31 agrees to and complies with program rules adopted pursuant to RCW
32 28B.92.150. However, any institution, branch, extension or facility
33 operating within the state of Washington that is affiliated with an
34 institution operating in another state must be:

35 (i) A separately accredited member institution of any such
36 accrediting association;

37 (ii) A branch of a member institution of an accrediting
38 association recognized by rule of the council for purposes of this
39 section, that is eligible for federal student financial aid

1 assistance and has operated as a nonprofit college or university
2 delivering on-site classroom instruction for a minimum of twenty
3 consecutive years within the state of Washington, and has an annual
4 enrollment of at least seven hundred full-time equivalent students;

5 (iii) A nonprofit institution recognized by the state of
6 Washington as provided in RCW 28B.77.240; or

7 (iv) An approved apprenticeship program under chapter 49.04 RCW.

8 (~~(+5)~~) (6) "Maximum Washington college grant":

9 (a) For students attending two or four-year institutions of
10 higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, is tuition and
11 estimated fees for fifteen quarter credit hours or the equivalent, as
12 determined by the office, including operating fees, building fees,
13 and services and activities fees.

14 (b) For students attending private four-year not-for-profit
15 institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20
16 academic year, is nine thousand seven hundred thirty-nine dollars and
17 may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth
18 factor.

19 (c) For students attending two-year private not-for-profit
20 institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20
21 academic year, is three thousand six hundred ninety-four dollars and
22 may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth
23 factor.

24 (d) For students attending four-year private for-profit
25 institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20
26 academic year, is eight thousand five hundred seventeen dollars and
27 may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth
28 factor.

29 (e) For students attending two-year private for-profit
30 institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20
31 academic year, is two thousand eight hundred twenty-three dollars and
32 may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth
33 factor.

34 (f) For students attending Western Governors University-
35 Washington, as established in RCW 28B.77.240, in the 2019-20 academic
36 year, is five thousand six hundred nineteen dollars and may increase
37 each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor.

38 (g) For students attending approved apprenticeship programs, is
39 tuition and fees, as determined by the office, in addition to
40 required program supplies and equipment.

1 (~~(6)~~) (7) "Office" means the office of student financial
2 assistance.

3 (~~(7)~~) (8) "Tuition growth factor" means an increase of no more
4 than the average annual percentage growth rate of the median hourly
5 wage for Washington for the previous fourteen years as the wage is
6 determined by the federal bureau of labor statistics.

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