

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## HB 1805

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning the opportunity scholarship program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Paul, Boehnke and Shewmake.

**House Committee on College & Workforce Development**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

### **Background:**

#### Washington State Opportunity Scholarship Program Overview.

The Washington State Opportunity Scholarship Program (WSOS) was established in 2011 to provide scholarships to low- and middle-income resident students pursuing professional–technical degrees or bachelor's degrees in high-demand majors in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and health care. The WSOS was expanded in 2018 to provide scholarships for students in high-demand community and technical college (CTC) programs, earning advanced degrees in health professions, and studying for high-demand jobs in rural counties (Rural Jobs Program). The WSOS is a public-private partnership in which the state matches private contributions to fund the scholarships.

In addition to other eligibility requirements, a student must have a family income at or below 125 percent of the state median family income at the time the student applies for a scholarship.

A resident student is defined based on one of 24 factors including provisions for military and veteran status, being domiciled in Washington for a period of time, and status as a dependent with a parent domiciled in the state for a period of time.

Once WSOS funds are awarded, the scholarship is automatically renewed as long as the student submits annual documentation of filing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid

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(FAFSA), Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) and other education tax credits, until the student withdraws from, completes, or has taken the credit or clock-hour equivalent of 125 percent of the published length of time of the program, whichever occurs first.

Rural County High Employer Demand Jobs Program.

The Rural County High Employer Demand Jobs Program (Rural Jobs Program) was established in 2018 to meet the workforce needs of business and industry in rural counties by assisting students in earning certificates, associate degrees, or other industry-recognized credentials necessary for employment in high employer demand fields. The Rural Jobs Program is funded through a combination of private funds and state matching funds.

To be eligible to receive scholarship funds under the Rural Jobs Program, a student must:

- either be a resident of an eligible county and be enrolled in a CTC, or have attended and graduated from a school in an eligible school district and be enrolled in a CTC that is located in an eligible county;
- be a resident student as defined in the WSOS;
- be in a certificate, degree, or other industry-recognized credential or training program that prepares students for a high employer demand field;
- have a family income that does not exceed 70 percent of the state median family income adjusted for family size; and
- demonstrate financial need according to the FAFSA or WASFA application.

To remain eligible to receive scholarship funds under the Rural Jobs Program, the student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0.

**Summary:**

Washington State Opportunity Scholarship Program.

Advanced degree students who have a family income over 125 percent of the state median income are eligible to receive WSOS funds if they demonstrate financial need through other factors such as a history of prior household income, income loss caused by entering the advanced degree program, level of student debt at application and annually thereafter, or other factors determined by the program.

To remain eligible under the WSOS, students must meet satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible program as determined by the Washington College Grant (WCG) Program.

Professional-technical certificates and professional-technical degrees are expanded to include eligible registered apprenticeship programs.

The definition of "resident student" for purposes of the WSOS is changed to align with the WCG.

The date on which the WSOS is no longer automatically renewed is amended to include five years, in addition to 125 percent of the program length or credit clock-hour equivalent, as defined for the WCG.

Rural Jobs Program.

In addition to other eligibility requirements, a student may qualify for the WSOS Rural Jobs Program if the student:

- is a resident of an eligible county;
- has attended and graduated from a school in an eligible school district; or
- is enrolled in a CTC located in an eligible county or participating in an eligible apprenticeship in an eligible county.

To ensure predictable treatment of the program in the budget process, the state match for the rural jobs program must be based on donations and pledges received as of the date of the caseload forecast.

The 2.0 grade point average requirement for continued eligibility in the Rural Jobs Program is removed and students are instead required to meet satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible program as defined in the WCG. Eligibility may not extend beyond five years or 125 percent of the published length of the program in which the student is enrolled or the credit or clock-hour equivalent.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	89	4	
Senate	48	0	(Senate amended)
House	92	5	(House concurred)

**Effective:** June 9, 2022