

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1425

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As of March 9, 2021

**Title:** An act relating to amending the opportunity scholarship act to expand scholarships for community and technical college students.

**Brief Description:** Expanding scholarships for community and technical college students.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on College & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Representatives Taylor, Leavitt, Valdez, Santos, Johnson, J., Ortiz-Self, Simmons, Rule, Ramel, Chopp, Pollet, Hackney and Morgan).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/25/21, 98-0.

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 3/11/21.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Eliminates the community college and advanced degree program award requirement that a student must have graduated from a Washington high school.
- Modifies the residency requirements for the rural jobs program.

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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

**Background:** Washington State Opportunity Scholarship Program. The Washington State Opportunity Scholarship (WSOS) program was established in 2011 to provide scholarships to low- and middle-income resident students pursuing eligible high-demand baccalaureate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and health care, and to encourage scholarship recipients to work in the state upon completion of their degrees. The program was expanded in 2018 to provide awards to students in high-demand community

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and technical college programs as well as advanced degree programs.

Rural County High Employer Demand Jobs Program. The Rural County High Employer Demand Jobs Program (rural jobs) 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. Funding for the program is a combination of private funds and state matching funds. State matching funds may not exceed \$1 million in a single fiscal biennium. Under the program, students are eligible to receive scholarship funds and support services, as determined by the WSOS Board, to help meet eligible expenses when the student enrolls in a public community and technical college program that prepares students for a high employer demand field.

**Summary of Bill:** To be eligible for the career and technical scholarship or the advanced degree program under the WSOS, a student no longer must have graduated from a Washington high school.

Eligibility for the rural jobs scholarship is modified. To be eligible for the rural jobs award a student must either:

- be a resident of a rural county and be enrolled in a community or technical college; or
- have graduated from a school in a rural county and be enrolled in a community or technical college located in a rural county.

**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.