

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5215

---

---

As of January 20, 2021

**Title:** An act relating to increasing the maximum Washington college grant award at independent institutions of higher education.

**Brief Description:** Increasing the maximum Washington college grant award at independent institutions of higher education.

**Sponsors:** Senators Conway, Holy, Das, Nguyen, Nobles, Randall and Wilson, C..

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/21/21.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Increases the maximum Washington College Grant award for students attending private four-year not-for-profit institutions to be the equivalent of the maximum award at the public higher education institutions.

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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

**Background:** The State Need Grant was modified in 2019 and renamed the Washington College Grant (WCG). The WCG is the state's largest financial aid program and provides awards to low-income students to pursue postsecondary education. The WCG is an entitlement program with guaranteed awards for those students who qualify.

The WCG award amount varies based on the institution the student attends and the student's family income. For students attending the state's public institutions, the maximum award is tuition and services and activities fees for 15 quarter credit hours or the equivalent. For students attending private four-year not-for-profit higher education institutions, in 2019-20

---

*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

the maximum award was \$9,739. The maximum award for students at private four-year not for-profit institutions may increase by no more than the tuition growth factor annually. An eligible student may receive a WCG for five years or up to 125 percent of the published length of the student's program. Part-time students receive prorated awards.

The tuition growth factor means an increase of no more than the average annual percentage growth rate of the median hourly wage for Washington for the previous 14 years as the wage is determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**Summary of Bill:** The maximum WCG award for students attending private four-year not for-profit institutions is modified to be the lesser of the maximum award at a public two or four-year higher education institutions or the individual institution's tuition for 15 quarter credits.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 18, 2021.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.