
SENATE BILL 5666

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Senators Randall, Trudeau, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Nguyen, Saldaña, Valdez, and Wellman

Read first time 02/01/23. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to a community or technical college student
2 housing pilot program; adding a new section to chapter 28B.50 RCW;
3 creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature intends to address the
6 critical lack of affordable housing options for students attending
7 institutions of higher education in the state. Surveys conducted by
8 the Washington student achievement council found that 34 percent of
9 Washington college students reported experiencing housing insecurity
10 and 11 percent reported experiencing homelessness in the past year.
11 The legislature recognizes that the high cost of housing is a barrier
12 to access and success for many students, particularly those from low-
13 income backgrounds. The legislature aims to promote equitable access
14 to higher education by funding the research and design of affordable
15 housing programs for students attending higher education institutions
16 in the state. The legislature further recognizes that to
17 strategically eliminate housing insecurity as a barrier for low-
18 income students, resources are needed to properly design affordable
19 housing programs tailored to each institution's unique needs. It is
20 the belief of the legislature that the programs this research
21 produces will have a positive impact on the education and well-being

1 of students in the state and will contribute to the long-term
2 economic and social prosperity of the state as a whole.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.50
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
6 specific purpose, the college board shall administer a pilot program
7 to provide planning grants to partnerships between community and
8 technical colleges and public housing authorities or nonprofit
9 community organizations to design and later administer a subsidized
10 housing or housing voucher program for Washington college grant
11 eligible students.

12 (2) The college board shall select one or more colleges to
13 receive a planning grant to develop a housing program formed in
14 cooperation with a public housing authority or nonprofit community
15 organization. Planning grants shall be one year in duration. Priority
16 shall be given to colleges and public housing authorities or
17 nonprofit community organizations that have previous experience
18 partnering to administer a housing voucher or subsidized housing
19 program. At a minimum, the pilot program must:

20 (a) Be a partnership between a public housing authority or
21 nonprofit community organization and a community or technical
22 college;

23 (b) Serve Washington college grant eligible students;

24 (c) Provide adequate caseworker assistance to students seeking
25 participation in the program;

26 (d) Provide low or no-barrier housing for previously incarcerated
27 students; and

28 (e) Prioritize opportunities which provide for a low cost of
29 living.

30 (3) Upon successful completion of a planning grant, a community
31 or technical college in partnership with a public housing authority
32 or nonprofit community organization may award housing vouchers or
33 subsidized housing to Washington college grant eligible students.

34 (4) Colleges selected to participate in the pilot program shall
35 submit a joint report to the appropriate committees of the
36 legislature, and in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, by July 1, 2024.
37 The report must include:

- 1 (a) Information on which colleges were selected for participation
2 in the pilot program and the public housing authorities or nonprofit
3 community organizations acting as partners;
- 4 (b) The design of the housing voucher or subsidized housing
5 program;
- 6 (c) The number of students served or expected to be served;
- 7 (d) The types of housing offered to students;
- 8 (e) The average out-of-pocket cost or anticipated out-of-pocket
9 cost for housing for students participating in the program; and
- 10 (f) Lessons learned and recommendations for scaling up similar
11 partnerships to help student access stable and affordable housing.
- 12 (5) "Washington college grant eligible" means those students who
13 are eligible for the Washington college grant program under RCW
14 28B.92.200.
- 15 (6) The pilot program expires July 1, 2026.
- 16 (7) This section expires January 1, 2027.

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