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**SENATE BILL 5542**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Boehnke, Slatter, Hasegawa, Nobles, Ramos, and Valdez; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

AN ACT Relating to tuition waivers for high school completers at community and technical colleges; and amending RCW 28B.15.520.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.15.520 and 2015 c 55 s 217 are each amended to read as follows:

Subject to the limitations of RCW 28B.15.910, the governing boards of the community and technical colleges:

(1) May waive all or a portion of tuition fees and services and activities fees for students ((~~nineteen years of age or older~~)) who are eligible for resident tuition and fee rates as defined in RCW 28B.15.012 through 28B.15.015, who enroll in a course of study or program which will enable them to finish their high school education and obtain a high school diploma or certificate, but who are not eligible students as defined by RCW 28A.600.405;

(2)(a) Shall waive all of tuition fees and services and activities fees for:

(i) Children of any law enforcement officer as defined in chapter 41.26 RCW, firefighter as defined in chapter 41.26 or 41.24 RCW, or Washington state patrol officer who lost his or her life or became totally disabled in the line of duty while employed by any public law enforcement agency or full time or volunteer fire department in this state: PROVIDED, That such persons may receive the waiver only if they begin their course of study at a community or technical college within ten years of their graduation from high school; and

(ii) Surviving spouses of any law enforcement officer as defined in chapter 41.26 RCW, firefighter as defined in chapter 41.26 or 41.24 RCW, or Washington state patrol officer who lost his or her life or became totally disabled in the line of duty while employed by any public law enforcement agency or full time or volunteer fire department in this state.

(b) For the purposes of this section, "totally disabled" means a person who has become totally and permanently disabled for life by bodily injury or disease, and is thereby prevented from performing any occupation or gainful pursuit.

(c) The governing boards of the community and technical colleges shall report to the state board for community and technical colleges on the annual cost of tuition fees and services and activities fees waived for surviving spouses and children under (a) of this subsection. The state board for community and technical colleges shall consolidate the reports of the waived fees and annually report to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature; and

(3) May waive all or a portion of the nonresident tuition fees differential for:

(a) Nonresident students enrolled in a community or technical college course of study or program which will enable them to finish their high school education and obtain a high school diploma or certificate but who are not eligible students as defined by RCW 28A.600.405. The waiver shall be in effect only for those courses which lead to a high school diploma or certificate; and

(b) Up to forty percent of the students enrolled in the regional education program for deaf students, subject to federal funding of such program.

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