

**RCW 28B.15.031 "Operating fees"—Defined—Disposition.** (1) The term "operating fees" as used in this chapter shall include the fees, other than building fees, charged all students registering at the state's colleges and universities but shall not include fees for short courses, self-supporting degree credit programs and courses, marine station work, experimental station work, correspondence or extension courses, and individual instruction and student deposits or rentals, disciplinary and library fines, which colleges and universities shall have the right to impose, laboratory, gymnasium, health, technology and student activity fees, or fees, charges, rentals, and other income derived from any or all revenue producing lands, buildings and facilities of the colleges or universities heretofore or hereafter acquired, constructed or installed, including but not limited to income from rooms, dormitories, dining rooms, hospitals, infirmaries, housing or student activity buildings, vehicular parking facilities, land, or the appurtenances thereon, or such other special fees as may be established by any college or university board of trustees or regents from time to time. All moneys received as operating fees at any institution of higher education shall be deposited in a local account containing only operating fees revenue and related interest: PROVIDED, That a minimum of four percent of operating fees shall be retained by four-year institutions of higher education and a minimum of three and one-half percent of operating fees shall be retained by the community and technical colleges for the purposes of RCW 28B.15.820. At least thirty percent of operating fees required to be retained by the four-year institutions for purposes of RCW 28B.15.820 shall be used only for the purposes of RCW 28B.15.820(10).

(2) In addition to the three and one-half percent of operating fees retained by the institutions under subsection (1) of this section, up to three percent of operating fees charged to students at community and technical colleges shall be transferred to the community and technical college innovation account for the implementation of the college board's strategic technology plan in RCW 28B.50.515. The percentage to be transferred to the community and technical college innovation account shall be determined by the college board each year but shall not exceed three percent of the operating fees collected each year.

(3) Local operating fee accounts shall not be subject to appropriation by the legislature but shall be subject to allotment procedures by budget program and fiscal year under chapter 43.88 RCW. [2015 3rd sp.s. c 36 s 1; 2012 c 230 s 6. Prior: 2011 1st sp.s. c 10 s 2; 2011 c 274 s 2; 2003 c 232 s 2; 1996 c 142 s 2; 1995 1st sp.s. c 9 s 2; prior: 1993 sp.s. c 18 s 6; 1993 c 379 s 201; 1987 c 15 s 2; prior: 1985 c 390 s 13; 1985 c 356 s 2; 1982 1st ex.s. c 37 s 12; 1981 c 257 s 1; 1979 c 151 s 14; 1977 ex.s. c 331 s 3; 1971 ex.s. c 279 s 2.]

**Short title—2015 3rd sp.s. c 36:** "This act may be known and cited as the college affordability program." [2015 3rd sp.s. c 36 s 13.]

**Savings report—2012 c 230:** See RCW 28B.10.0291.

**Findings—Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 10:** "(1) The legislature finds that in the knowledge-based, globally interdependent economy of the twenty-first century, postsecondary education is the most

indispensable form of currency. Public institutions of higher education are drivers of economic growth and job creation and incubators for innovation. An educated citizenry is a critical component of our democracy, and a commitment to provide public funding for public higher education institutions is imperative. At the same time, the legislature finds that Washington state is experiencing a profound structural shift in the funding of higher education. State support has declined dramatically over the past twenty years, thereby necessitating increases in tuition to supplant the support of higher education from general taxpayers. The problem faced by all stakeholders - students and their families, institutions, and policymakers - is a growing reliance on tuition dollars and a reduced reliance on state support. At the same time, there is insufficient visibility into the use of locally retained tuition dollars. There is little transparency regarding whether increasing tuition dollars gives students, their families, and Washington taxpayers a high-value return on investment. Responding to those concerns, and recognizing that tuition-setting authority is interrelated to a wide variety of factors including state funding, student aid, admissions, dual credit, educational effectiveness, regulatory and reporting requirements, and other policies and practices, this higher education opportunity act directs a number of higher education system reforms.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature to:

(a) Ensure that tuition dollars are spent to improve student access, affordability, and the quality of education;

(b) Establish a clear nexus between tuition dollars and improved productivity and greater accountability of public institutions of higher education;

(c) Create a modern and robust higher education financial system that funds outcomes and results rather than input and process; and

(d) Continue a commitment to public funding of higher education through state appropriations that are essential for providing access, affordability, and quality in higher education for all students across the state.

(3)(a) It is the intent of the legislature to set goals for four-year institutions of higher education to increase the number of students who earn baccalaureate degrees, while maintaining quality, and achieve the following initial degree completion targets by 2018:

(i) Increasing the number of bachelor's degrees earned by Washington's resident students from the 2009-10 academic year levels by at least six thousand degrees completed or by twenty-seven percent;

(ii) Consistent with the priority for expanding the number of enrollments and degrees in the fields of engineering, technology, biotechnology, sciences, computer sciences, and mathematics, at least two thousand of the additional degrees under this subsection (3)(a) would be awarded in the areas of science, which includes agriculture and natural resources, biology and biomedical sciences, computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technologies, health professions and clinical sciences, mathematics and statistics, and physical sciences and science technologies; and

(iii) Attaining parity in degree attainment for students from underrepresented groups, which would mean that at least nineteen percent of the degrees awarded would include students who are low-income or are the first in their families to attend college.

(b) It is the intent of the legislature that the bachelor degree completion targets in (a) of this subsection be updated every two years based upon the state's changing population and economic needs

and that targets be set for five-year periods following the 2018 target.

(c) It is the intent of the legislature to urge four-year institutions of higher education to place the highest priority on achieving the degree completion targets under (a) of this subsection. The legislature intends to examine the strategies used and progress made by institutions of higher education to meet the targets in addition to evidence of increased cost-effectiveness and efficiency. The legislature recognizes that individual institutions develop their campus goals recognizing the role of their campus as part of the system of public higher education and may implement a variety of innovative methods to achieve these goals." [2011 1st sp.s. c 10 s 1.]

**Short title—2011 1st sp.s. c 10:** "This act may be known and cited as the higher education opportunity act." [2011 1st sp.s. c 10 s 30.]

**Finding—Intent—2011 c 274:** See note following RCW 28B.50.515.

**Finding—Intent—2003 c 232:** "The legislature finds that, as a partner in financing public higher education with students and parents who pay tuition and fees, periodic increases in state funding, state financial aid, and tuition must be authorized to provide high quality higher education for the citizens of Washington. It is the intent of the legislature to address higher education through a cooperative bipartisan effort that includes the legislative and executive branches of government, parents, students, educators, as well as business, labor, and community leaders. The legislature recognizes the importance of keeping the public commitment to public higher education and will continue searching for policies that halt the trend for the growth in tuition revenue to outpace the revenue provided by the state. The legislature believes that a well-educated citizenry is essential to both the private and the public good. The economic and civic health of the state require both an educated citizenry and a well-trained workforce. The six-year time limitation authorizing the governing boards to establish tuition rates for all students other than undergraduate resident students will give the legislature, the governor, and the higher education institutions an opportunity to determine whether this policy achieves the goal of maintaining quality and access for all who are eligible for and can benefit from a higher education. Using data from six years of this tuition policy, the state will be able to identify options for long-term funding of higher education including not only tuition but general fund and financial aid sources." [2003 c 232 s 1.]

**Severability—1996 c 142:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1996 c 142 s 4.]

**Effective date—1996 c 142:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [March 25, 1996]." [1996 c 142 s 5.]

**Intent—Purpose—1995 1st sp.s. c 9:** "It is the intent of the legislature to address higher education funding through a cooperative bipartisan effort that includes the legislative and executive branches of government, parents, students, educators, and concerned citizens. This effort will begin in 1995, with the results providing the basis for discussion during the 1996 legislative session for future decisions and final legislative action in 1997.

The purpose of this act is to provide tuition increases for public institutions of higher education as a transition measure until final action is taken in 1997." [1995 1st sp.s. c 9 s 1.]

**Effective date—1995 1st sp.s. c 9:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [June 14, 1995]." [1995 1st sp.s. c 9 s 14.]

**Appropriation—1993 sp.s. c 18:** "All moneys in the accounts established under \*RCW 28B.15.824 on July 1, 1993, are hereby appropriated to the respective institutions of higher education for deposit in the institution's local account established under RCW 28B.15.031." [1993 sp.s. c 18 s 15.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 28B.15.824 was repealed by 1993 c 379 s 206 and by 1993 sp.s. c 18 s 14, effective July 1, 1993.

**Effective date—1993 sp.s. c 18:** See note following RCW 28B.12.060.

**Intent—Severability—Effective date—1993 c 379:** See notes following RCW 28B.10.029.

**Effective date—1987 c 15:** See note following RCW 28B.15.411.

**Effective date—Severability—1982 1st ex.s. c 37:** See notes following RCW 28B.15.012.

**Severability—1981 c 257:** "If any provision of this amendatory act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1981 c 257 s 13.]

**Effective date—1977 ex.s. c 331:** "The effective date of this 1977 amendatory act shall be September 1, 1977." [1977 ex.s. c 331 s 5.]

**Severability—1977 ex.s. c 331:** "If any provision of this 1977 act, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act, or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1977 ex.s. c 331 s 4.]

**Severability—1971 ex.s. c 279:** See note following RCW 28B.15.005.