
Higher Education Committee

HB 1626

Brief Description: Aligning the higher education financial aid process with in-state tuition requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos, Haigh, Upthegrove, Pollet and Ryu.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds a new category of eligible students for both the State Need Grant and College Bound Scholarship program.
- Allows students to submit an application developed by the Office of Student Financial Assistance for provisional State Need Grants.

Hearing Date: 2/14/13

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

Resident Students.

Classification as a resident student allows an individual to pay resident tuition rates. There are thirteen categories of resident student, including the following five:

1. a financially independent student who has established a domicile in Washington State for one year immediately prior to the first day of class for which the student has registered and has established domicile in the state for purposes other than educational;
2. a dependent student, if one or both of the student's parents or legal guardians have maintained a domicile in Washington for at least one year before starting class;
3. a student classified as a resident on or before May 31, 1982, who was enrolled at a state institution during any term of the 1982-83 school year, so long as the student's enrollment is continuous;
4. a student who has spent at least 75 percent of his or her junior and senior years in high schools in this state, whose parents or legal guardians have been domiciled in the state for at least one year within the five-year period before the student graduates from high

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

school, and who enrolls in a public higher education institution within six months of leaving high school (for as long as the student remains continuously enrolled for three quarters or two semesters in any calendar year); or

5. a student who has:
 - a. either completed the full senior year of high school and obtained a diploma at a Washington high school or received the equivalent of a diploma;
 - b. lived in Washington for at least three years immediately prior to receiving the diploma or its equivalent;
 - c. continuously lived in the state after receiving the diploma or its equivalent and until being admitted to the institution of higher education; and
 - d. provided to the institution an affidavit indicating that the individual will file an application to become a permanent resident at the earliest opportunity the individual is eligible to do so and a willingness to engage in other activities necessary to acquire citizenship.

Except as provided in certain sections of the resident student eligibility statute, persons who are not citizens of the United States are considered nonresident students for tuition purposes.

State Need Grant.

The State Need Grant (SNG) is designed to offset a portion of educational costs for low-income students. According to the Student Achievement Council, during the 2011-12 academic year:

- 74,703 Washington students attending 68 institutions were served by the SNG.
- 32,171 students were eligible but unserved.
- \$267 million was dedicated to the SNG, which made up 94 percent of expenditures on Washington student aid programs.

Students are eligible for the SNG only if they are "resident students" according to the first four categories (1 through 4) listed above.

An institution of higher education may award an SNG to an eligible student on a provisional basis enrolled in three to six quarter credits if the student meets certain criteria, including:

- the student has not previously received an SNG from that institution;
- the student completes the required Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
- the institution has reviewed the student's financial condition and that of the student's family and determined that the student is likely eligible for an SNG; and
- the student has signed a document attesting to the fact that the financial information included on the FAFSA and any other financial information provided is accurate and complete, and that the student agrees to repay the institution if the student submitted false or incomplete information.

College Bound Scholarship.

The College Bound Scholarship program (CBS) provides financial aid covering the remaining cost of tuition at public institution rates after subtracting other forms of aid a student receives, plus a \$500 book allowance. Students must sign up in the seventh or eighth grade, graduate high school with a C or better average, be without a felony conviction, and successfully apply to a state higher education institution. Students must qualify for free and reduced lunch when they

sign up in middle school, and must have a family income below 65 percent of the median family income for Washington when they graduate from high school.

Students also must be "resident students" according to the first four categories (1 through 4) listed above.

Summary of Bill:

Eligibility for both the SNG and CBS includes the fifth category of "resident students" as defined above. This category includes any person who has:

- either completed the full senior year of high school and obtained a diploma at a Washington high school or received the equivalent of a diploma;
- lived in Washington for at least three years immediately prior to receiving the diploma or its equivalent;
- continuously lived in the state after receiving the diploma or its equivalent and until being admitted to the institution of higher education; and
- provided to the institution an affidavit indicating that the individual will file an application to become a permanent resident at the earliest opportunity the individual is eligible to do so and a willingness to engage in other activities necessary to acquire citizenship.

Students are eligible for provisional SNGs if they submit an application for financial aid developed by the Office of Student Financial Assistance or the FAFSA when enrolled in three to six quarter credits if they meet the existing requirements.

A technical correction is made. The term "Higher Education Coordinating Board or its successor" is replaced with the term "Office of Student Financial Assistance."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.