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## Higher Education Committee

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### HB 2801

**Brief Description:** Expanding higher education opportunities for certain students.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hansen, Haler, Hudgins, Stanford, Ortiz-Self, Santos, Pollet, Walkinshaw and Tarleton.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows students who qualify for resident tuition under the "1079" category to be eligible for the College Bound Scholarship program.
- Allows undocumented students receiving scholarship funds to renew their scholarship funds by filing a state financial aid application.

**Hearing Date:** 1/27/16

**Staff:** Trudes Tango (786-7384).

#### Background:

Students seeking federal student financial aid must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. Undocumented students are not eligible for federal student financial aid, and therefore generally do not file FAFSAs. However, undocumented students may be eligible for some state financial aid and may qualify as "resident students" for the purposes of paying in-state tuition fees.

For the purposes of in-state tuition, a student is a "resident student" if he or she fits into one of the categories listed in the statute. Under one category, an undocumented person can qualify as a "resident student" if the person:

- completed the full senior year of high school and obtained a high school diploma at a Washington high school, or has received the equivalent of a diploma;
- lived in Washington for at least three years immediately prior to receiving the diploma or its equivalent; and
- continuously lived in the state since receiving the diploma or its equivalent; and

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- provides the institution an affidavit indicating the person will file an application to become a permanent resident at the earliest opportunity the individual is eligible to do so and is willing to engage in any other activities necessary to acquire citizenship.

Students in the above category are often called "1079ers" (named after the legislation that created the exception). Students who are 1079ers, as well as undocumented students who are in "deferred action status" (DACA) under federal immigration rules, are eligible for the State Need Grant.

#### College Bound Scholarship.

One form of state financial aid is the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) program, which is available to low-income students and students in foster care. Eligible students must sign a pledge during their seventh or eighth grade years. Those who graduate and meet certain conditions will receive financial aid to attend a two or four year institution of higher education.

#### Opportunity Scholarship Act.

Another form of financial aid is the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP), which provides scholarships to certain students to earn baccalaureate degrees in high demand programs of study. The OSP is funded through private funds and state matching funds. Students are eligible for the OSP if they meet certain income eligibility requirements and qualify as "resident students" under any of the categories of residency, including the 1079 category. Once awarded, and to the extent funds are available, the OSP is automatically renewed as long as the student files a FAFSA.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### College Bound Scholarship.

Students who qualify for resident tuition under the "1079" category are eligible for the CBS, as long as they meet the other requirements for CBS.

##### Opportunity Scholarship Program.

Students who are not able to apply for federal student aid using the FAFSA may still have their OSP funds renewed as long as they annually file a state financial aid application approved by the Office of Student Financial Assistance. This allows undocumented students to have their OSP funds renewed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested.

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