

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5623

As Passed Senate, March 12, 1997

Title: An act relating to higher education.

Brief Description: Establishing a home tuition program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Prince, Wood, Spanel, Fraser and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/11/97, 2/12/97, 2/20/97 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 3/12/97, 45-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5623 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Wood, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Bauer, Hale, Kohl, Patterson, Prince and Sheldon.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: Over time, the Legislature has considered a number of proposals regarding opportunities for Washington students to study at colleges and universities in other states and in other countries. Studies have shown significant benefits accrue not only to the students but also to the state as a result of these opportunities. International understanding, as well as an understanding of the various regions within the United States, contributes to the development of regional, linguistic and business expertise in areas of economic, political and cultural importance to Washington.

Current statute (RCW 28B.15.725) provides for undergraduate domestic exchange agreements between Washington public four-year institutions and institutions of higher education in other states. The statute provides a waiver of all or a portion of the nonresident tuition fees differential for one academic year. Current statute (RCW 28B.15.556) provides institutions with a limited opportunity to waive all or a portion of the tuition fees for graduate or undergraduate students of foreign nations while promoting reciprocal placements and waivers in foreign nations for Washington residents. These international waivers are limited to 100 at the University of Washington and Washington State University, and are limited to 20 at Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, Western Washington University and The Evergreen State College.

Summary of Bill: The home tuition program, allowing both undergraduate and graduate students at Washington State institutions of higher education to participate in exchanges with out-of-state higher education institutions, is created. Home tuition agreements are negotiated between Washington institutions and out-of-state institutions or consortiums of institutions.

Student participation is limited to one academic year. Students pay regular tuition and fees to their home college or university and exchange places with a student from a partner institution; or, the students pay resident tuition and fees to the host institution and do not pay at their home institution.

Out-of-state students participating in the home tuition program are included in the definition of resident student.

The exchanges allowed under the home tuition program are both domestic and international. The domestic exchange waiver is eliminated; the limited international exchange waivers continue. Both domestic and international exchanges will occur through home tuition agreements so long as no loss of tuition and fees revenue occurs as a result of the agreements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: International and domestic exchanges prepare our students to participate in the world economy. The six four-year institutions support this method for exchanges between Washington students and other states/countries. All of this can be done with no additional cost to students or the state. There will be a one-to-one exchange. There are 40 other states with similar programs. Students on international home tuition will provide affordable opportunities for cultural exchanges. To participate in the NAFTA program, Washington must have this sort of program. Experiential education is becoming even more important in the development of life and work skills. The waiver program currently in statute does not meet the demand for student exchanges, but the waiver provision will allow the development of reciprocal arrangements and then it could be phased out.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: John Donnelly, WSU; David Hedrick, CWU; Victoria Torres, CWU student; David Fenner, UW student exchange director.