

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SHB 1140

C 345 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Changing higher education financial aid provisions.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Higher Education (Originally sponsored by Representatives Carlson, Kenney, Radcliff, Lantz, Dunn, Esser, Edmonds, Cooper, Campbell and K. Schmidt).

House Committee on Higher Education
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Background:

The 1969 Legislature created the state need grant program to help financially needy or disadvantaged Washington residents attend college. It is the state's oldest and largest student aid program. The 1998-99 funding level is \$72.4 million, which will provide grants to about 50,000 students. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) administers the program.

In March 1998, the chairs of the House and Senate Higher Education committees asked the HECB, in consultation with the higher education community, to study the state need grant program and to develop recommendations prior to the 1999 session. In October 1998, the HECB adopted a set of recommendations and forwarded them to the Legislature.

Summary:

The HECB's recommendations regarding the state need grant program are endorsed by the Legislature. These include:

- reaffirming that the program is to assist low-income, needy and disadvantaged Washington students;
- basing grant amounts on tuition rates;
- requiring students to contribute to the cost of their education from sources other than grants;
- requiring students to document their need for a dependent care allowance; and

- allowing institutions to continue grants for students whose income increases slightly.

A student's eligibility to receive a state need grant is limited to the equivalent of five years or up to 125 percent of the student's program length. Five years must elapse between associate degrees earned with need grant assistance, unless they are earned concurrently.

The HECB is required to ensure that state financial aid follows the student to the student's choice of institution.

Statutory references to a "student financial aid" program are changed to cite specifically the "state need grant" program.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 95 0
Senate 47 0 (Senate amended)
House (House refused to concur)
Senate (Senate receded)
Senate 43 1 (Senate amended)
House 96 0 (House concurred)

Effective: July 25, 1999