

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2022

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to expanding the national guard scholarship program.

Brief Description: Expanding the national guard scholarship program.

Sponsors: Representatives Schindler, Sullivan, Bush, Lantz, Mielke, Lovick, Cairnes, Hurst, Kastama, McDonald, Esser, Conway, Campbell, Benson and D. Schmidt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/26/00, 1/28/00 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Removes residency for the purposes of tuition as a eligibility requirement for the national guard scholarship program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Carlson, Republican Co-Chair; Kenney, Democratic Co-Chair; Lantz, Democratic Vice Chair; Radcliff, Republican Vice Chair; Dunn; Edmonds; Esser and Gombosky.

Staff: Erika Prager (786-7120).

Background: The Legislature created the national guard scholarship program in 1994. Under this program, members of the Washington National Guard may receive a conditional scholarship that cannot exceed the annual cost of undergraduate tuition and fees at the University of Washington, plus an allowance for books and supplies. The scholarship is dependent upon the recipient serving in the National Guard for one additional year for each year of conditional scholarship received. Failure to meet the service requirements results in an obligation to repay the conditional scholarship, with interest.

An eligible student is currently defined as an enlisted member or an officer of the rank of captain or below in the Washington National Guard who: (1) is a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012; and (2) attends an institution of higher education in Washington that is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

This scholarship program is administered by the Office of the Adjutant General of the Military Department. The Legislature appropriated \$75,000 in FY 2000 and \$75,000 in FY 2001 from the general fund solely for implementation of this conditional scholarship program.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The eligibility requirements for the National Guard conditional scholarship program are modified. An eligible student is defined as an enlisted member or an officer of the rank of captain or below in the Washington National Guard who attends an institution of higher education located in the state that is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. A student no longer needs to be a resident as defined in RCW 28B.15.012 to be eligible.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill reinstates the requirement of attending an institution of higher education located in Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: (Original Bill) The National Guard requires higher education for promotion. In some cases, guard members are married to active duty military who keep official residency in their state of origin. As a result, guard members cannot qualify for the scholarship although they live and work in Washington. The military is revenue positive for the general fund. Money brought into the state from the National Guard is significantly higher than the money spent on the scholarship program. This program encourages guard members to stay in the guard longer. It is cheaper to keep qualified guard members compared to training new ones.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rep. Lynn Schindler, prime sponsor; Rep. Dave Schmidt; and Major Carol Seger, Washington National Guard.