

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6695

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education, February 1, 2006

Title: An act relating to tuition waivers for veterans and national guard members.

Brief Description: Regarding tuition waivers for veterans and national guard members.

Sponsors: Senators Schmidt, McAuliffe, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen and Oke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: 2/1/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING, K-12 & HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6695 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Carrell, Delvin, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Rasmussen, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Shin.

Staff: Stephanie Yurcisin (786-7438)

Background: The state higher education institutions are granted the authority by the Legislature to waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for eligible students. All waiver programs are permissive for the institutions and for some waivers, known as state-supported waivers, it is assumed that money in the institutions' budgets will offset the tuition not collected from students as a result of granting the waivers. The authority to grant state-supported waivers is capped for each institution at a certain percentage in statute, but each institution decides how to apportion its waiver authority among the different waiver categories.

Within state-supported waiver authority, institutions of higher education may waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for an eligible National Guard member. Under current law, an "eligible national guard member" is defined as a National Guard member called to active duty who served in active federal service under Title 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code, in a war or conflict fought on foreign soil or in international waters, or in another location in support of those serving on foreign soil or in international waters. If the National Guard member had been discharged from service, the discharge must have been an honorable one to be eligible for a tuition waiver.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The definition of "eligible national guard member" for the purposes of tuition waivers is changed to include current members of the National Guard. The requirement that the Guard member must have been called to active duty to be eligible for the tuition waiver is removed.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The bill as referred to committee was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill fixes unintended consequences that occurred with the passage of a bill last session.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Senator Dave Schmidt, prime sponsor.