AN ACT Relating to adding eligibility criteria for higher education financial aid; amending RCW 28B.92.010; reenacting and amending RCW 28B.118.010; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature finds that many undocumented American youth arrive in this country and this state through the decision of their parents to relocate in search of opportunities to improve their lives and futures. Most of these youth have no mechanism to obtain legal residency, even when they have lived in these United States for most of their lives. These children should not be punished for their parents' decision to enter the United States.

On June 15, 2012, President Obama introduced the deferred action for childhood arrivals process. Building on this directive, this act is intended to provide a more affordable and attainable route to college for immigrant children granted deferred action for childhood arrival status who reside in Washington state. While extending in-state tuition to these youth has helped immigrant students better afford higher education in this state, financial aid is necessary to extend to them the American dream. The extension of financial aid to
these immigrant American youth is also necessary to position them for economic success and strengthen Washington state's competitive edge in the world economy.

Sec. 2. RCW 28B.118.010 and 2012 c 229 s 402 and 2012 c 163 s 8 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

The office of student financial assistance shall design the Washington college bound scholarship program in accordance with this section and in alignment with the state need grant program in chapter 28B.92 RCW unless otherwise provided in this section.

(1) "Eligible students" are those students who:

(a) Qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. If a student qualifies in the seventh grade, the student remains eligible even if the student does not receive free or reduced-price lunches thereafter; ((∅ζ))

(b) Are granted deferred action for childhood arrival status pursuant to the rules and regulations adopted by the United States citizenship and immigration services; or

(c) Are dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW and:

(i) In grade seven through twelve; or

(ii) Are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one and have not graduated from high school.

(2) Eligible students shall be notified of their eligibility for the Washington college bound scholarship program beginning in their seventh grade year. Students shall also be notified of the requirements for award of the scholarship.

(3)(a) To be eligible for a Washington college bound scholarship, a student eligible under subsection (1)(a) of this section must sign a pledge during seventh or eighth grade that includes a commitment to graduate from high school with at least a C average and with no felony convictions. The pledge must be witnessed by a parent or guardian and forwarded to the office of student financial assistance by mail or electronically, as indicated on the pledge form.

(b) A student eligible under subsection (1)(b) of this section must sign a pledge during the seventh or eighth grade that includes a commitment to graduate from high school with at least a C average and with no felony convictions. The pledge must be witnessed by a parent or guardian and forwarded to the office of student financial assistance
by mail or electronically, as indicated on the pledge form. Students who have not yet been granted deferred action for childhood arrival status pursuant to the rules and regulations adopted by the United States citizenship and immigration services may sign the pledge, but must have been granted deferred action for childhood arrival status pursuant to the rules and regulations adopted by the United States citizenship and immigration services by the time they enroll in an eligible institution of higher education.

(c) A student eligible under this subsection (1)((b) of this section)) (c) shall be automatically enrolled, with no action necessary by the student or the student's family, and the enrollment form must be forwarded by the department of social and health services to the ((higher education coordinating board or its successor)) office of student financial assistance by mail or electronically, as indicated on the form.

(4)(a) Scholarships shall be awarded to eligible students graduating from public high schools, approved private high schools under chapter 28A.195 RCW, or who received home-based instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW.

(b) To receive the Washington college bound scholarship, a student must graduate with at least a "C" average from a public high school or an approved private high school under chapter 28A.195 RCW in Washington or have received home-based instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW, must have no felony convictions, and must either be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a) through ((d))) (e) or have been granted deferred action for childhood arrival status pursuant to the rules and regulations adopted by the United States citizenship and immigration services.

(5) A student's family income will be assessed upon graduation before awarding the scholarship.

(6) If at graduation from high school the student's family income does not exceed sixty-five percent of the state median family income, scholarship award amounts shall be as provided in this section.

(a) For students attending two or four-year institutions of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, the value of the award shall be (i) the difference between the student's tuition and required fees, less the value of any state-funded grant, scholarship, or waiver
assistance the student receives; (ii) plus five hundred dollars for
books and materials.

(b) For students attending private four-year institutions of higher
education in Washington, the award amount shall be the representative
average of awards granted to students in public research universities
in Washington.

(c) For students attending private vocational schools in
Washington, the award amount shall be the representative average of
awards granted to students in public community and technical colleges
in Washington.

(7) Recipients may receive no more than four full-time years' worth
of scholarship awards.

(8) Institutions of higher education shall award the student all
need-based and merit-based financial aid for which the student would
otherwise qualify. The Washington college bound scholarship is
intended to replace unmet need, loans, and, at the student's option,
work-study award before any other grants or scholarships are reduced.

(9) The first scholarships shall be awarded to students graduating
in 2012.

(10) The state of Washington retains legal ownership of tuition
units awarded as scholarships under this chapter until the tuition
units are redeemed. These tuition units shall remain separately held
from any tuition units owned under chapter 28B.95 RCW by a Washington
college bound scholarship recipient.

(11) The scholarship award must be used within five years of
receipt. Any unused scholarship tuition units revert to the Washington
college bound scholarship account.

(12) Should the recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any
reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the scholarship
tuition units shall revert to the Washington college bound scholarship
account.

Sec. 3. RCW 28B.92.010 and 2004 c 275 s 34 are each amended to
read as follows:

The purposes of this chapter are to establish the principles upon
which the state financial aid programs will be based and to establish
the state of Washington state need grant program, thus assisting
financially needy or disadvantaged students domiciled in Washington to
obtain the opportunity of attending an accredited institution of higher education. State need grants under this chapter are available only to students who are either resident students as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a) through ((d)) (e) or persons who have resided in Washington state for at least three years immediately prior to being admitted to an eligible institution of higher education and have been granted deferred action for childhood arrival status pursuant to the rules and regulations adopted by the United States citizenship and immigration services.

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