

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2009

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Higher Education

**Title:** An act relating to providing higher education support for gold star families.

**Brief Description:** Providing higher education support for gold star families.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Reeves, Stonier, Riccelli, Peterson, Doglio, Jinkins, Kilduff, Lovick, Tarleton, McBride, Ormsby, Stanford, Orwall, Muri, Slatter, Ryu and Fey.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Higher Education: 2/14/17, 2/15/17 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Provides a \$500 annual textbook stipend to children and spouses receiving a tuition waiver because their parent or spouse passed away, became totally disabled, or is considered a prisoner of war or missing in action due to active military service.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.  
Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Holy, Ranking Minority Member; Van Werven, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Orwall, Sells, Stambaugh and Tarleton.

**Staff:** Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

**Background:**

State law requires and authorizes public institutions of higher education to grant various tuition and fee waivers. The institutions are limited in their tuition and fee waiver authority in that the total amount of tuition and fee revenue waived, exempted, or reduced may not exceed a percentage of their estimated gross operating fee revenue.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The public institutions of higher education are required to waive undergraduate tuition and fees for children and spouses of an eligible veteran or National Guard member, who as a result of serving:

- lost his or her life;
- became totally disabled; or
- is considered a prisoner of war (POW) or missing in action (MIA).

In order to be eligible for the tuition waiver, a child must be domiciled in Washington and be between the ages of 17 and 26. The spouse or domestic partner must be a Washington domiciliary, not have remarried or entered into another domestic partnership, and must use the tuition waiver within 10 years of the date of death, disability, or determination of POW or MIA status.

The child or spouse may receive a tuition waiver until he or she has earned 200 quarter credits, or the equivalent of semester credits.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

A \$500 annual stipend for textbooks and course materials is provided to recipients of tuition waivers received because the recipient's spouse or parent lost his or her life, became totally disabled, or is considered a POW or MIA due to serving in active duty military or the National Guard.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The textbook and course materials stipend was reduced from \$1,500 to \$500.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Gold Star families pay the ultimate sacrifice. Not all of these families receive federal benefits and tuition has skyrocketed, so this would assist these families in their pursuit of higher education.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Reeves, prime sponsor.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.