
SENATE BILL 6425

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senators Stanford, Lovelett, McCoy, Wilson, C., Nguyen, Hunt, Takko, Sheldon, Van De Wege, Lias, Das, Hasegawa, and Saldaña

Read first time 01/16/20. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the American Indian cultural
2 study grant; adding a new chapter to Title 28B RCW; and creating a
3 new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes the benefit to
6 our state and nation of providing equal educational opportunities for
7 all races and nationalities. The legislature finds that American
8 Indian students are underrepresented in Washington's colleges and
9 universities as a result of past discriminatory practices. The
10 legislature also finds that such practices have hindered the
11 advancement and promotion of specialized areas of knowledge that are
12 vital to fostering American Indian wellness, cultural revitalization,
13 and political sovereignty. The legislature finds that creating a
14 grant program giving American Indian students the means and incentive
15 to obtain a postsecondary credential in specialized areas of
16 knowledge will help to rectify past discrimination and that the state
17 will benefit from contributions made by American Indian students who
18 pursue specialized fields of study.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
2 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
3 otherwise.

4 (1) "Council" means the Washington student achievement council.

5 (2) "Eligible degree or certificate program" means a degree or
6 credential program intended to promote the understanding and study of
7 specialized areas of knowledge fostering American Indian wellness,
8 cultural revitalization, or political sovereignty at an institution
9 of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.92.030.

10 (3) "Eligible student" means a student who demonstrates financial
11 need, as defined in RCW 28B.92.030, and who meets all of the
12 following criteria:

13 (a) A member of a federally recognized Indian tribe;

14 (b) Domiciled within the state for a minimum of one year as
15 provided in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a) or (b); and

16 (c) Registered for, and enrolled in, courses leading to a degree
17 or certificate in an eligible degree or certificate program.

18 (4) "Washington American Indian cultural study grant" means:

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

24 (b) For students attending private four-year institutions of
25 higher education in Washington, the representative average of awards
26 granted to students in public research universities in Washington or
27 the representative average of awards granted to students in public
28 research universities in Washington in the year of high school
29 graduation, whichever is greater.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Subject to the amounts appropriated for
31 this specific purpose, the council, in collaboration with the
32 advisory committee established in section 5 of this act, shall
33 provide Washington American Indian cultural study grant funds to
34 eligible students. Grant funds shall be disbursed beginning no later
35 than the fall term of the 2021 academic year if, by that date, state
36 funds have been received. Thereafter, scholarship funds shall be
37 disbursed on an annual basis.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** By December 1, 2021, and in compliance
2 with RCW 43.01.036, the council must submit a report to the
3 appropriate higher education committees of the legislature that
4 provides details and aggregate data on participating students,
5 awards, enrollment, graduation, and student persistence. Reports
6 shall be due to the appropriate committees once every four years
7 thereafter.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The council shall establish an advisory
9 committee to assist in program design and to develop criteria for the
10 screening and selection of scholarship recipients. The committee
11 shall be composed of persons involved in helping American Indian
12 students to obtain a higher education. The membership of the
13 committee may include, but is not limited to, representatives of
14 Indian tribes, urban Indians, the governor's office of Indian
15 affairs, the Washington state Indian education association, and
16 institutions of higher education. The committee may share the same
17 members of the committee established in RCW 28B.108.020.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Sections 2 through 5 of this act
19 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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