

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1674

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Higher Education*

Title: An act relating to freezing tuition and fees at 1990 rates for Persian Gulf veterans.

Brief Description: Freezing tuition and fees at 1990 rates for Persian Gulf veterans.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Orr, Spanel, Locke, Jacobsen, Heavey, Wineberry, Dorn, Hargrove, Morris, Riley, Basich, Rayburn, Grant, Anderson, Leonard, Sheldon, Cantwell, Jones, Nelson, Rasmussen, Dellwo, R. King, Roland, Zellinsky, R. Fisher, Winsley, Holland, O'Brien, Prentice, Pruitt, Ogden, Miller, Paris, Ebersole, Mitchell, Kremen, Scott, H. Myers and Inslee.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, February 28, 1991, DP.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HIGHER EDUCATION**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 12 members: Representatives Jacobsen, Chair; Ogden, Vice Chair; Wood, Ranking Minority Member; May, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Fraser; Ludwig; Miller; Prince; Sheldon; Spanel; and Van Luven.

Staff: Susan Hosch (786-7120).

Background: Washington provides a number of tuition and fee waivers, reduced fees, and residency exemptions for veterans, active duty military personnel, and for some of the members of their families. The first waiver program for military personnel was adopted in 1921. During that year, the University of Washington was authorized to waive tuition for military veterans.

Active duty military personnel are exempt from the nonresident tuition differential charged to out-of-state students. The waiver is also extended to their spouses and dependent children. Tuition and fee waivers are granted to children of Washington residents who were prisoners of war

or missing in action in southeast Asia during the Vietnam conflict.

Veterans who enrolled before October 1, 1977, who are state residents and who are no longer entitled to federal education benefits may receive a tuition and fee waiver. Veterans who are not state residents but meet the other conditions may have one-half of the nonresident tuition differential waived at the research universities.

Veterans of the Vietnam conflict pay reduced tuition rates if they served in the southeast Asia theater of operations between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975. Participants must be state residents when they enroll, and must have been enrolled in a state college or university by May 7, 1990. This program expires in 1995.

For the 1990-91 academic year, the foregone revenue for these programs is estimated to be \$6,269,000.

Summary of Bill: Certain veterans of the Persian Gulf combat zone are exempt from the payment of tuition and fee increases that occur after the 1990-91 academic year. On August 1, 1990, eligible veterans must have been Washington domiciliaries for at least one year. They must also have an adjusted gross family income that does not exceed the state's median family income, as established by the Census Bureau.

Veteran of the Persian Gulf combat zone is defined. The veteran is a person who, during any portion of 1991, served in active federal service in a combat zone, as a member of the country's armed military or naval forces. Through executive order, the president must designate an area as a combat zone.

The tuition and fee waivers terminate on June 30, 1998.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Soldiers serving in the Persian Gulf are making sacrifices for their country. The federal government does not provide a reliable GI bill for today's soldiers. The proposed tuition waiver is a fitting way to show the state's appreciation for the service they have provided. It is similar to the waiver that the State provides to Vietnam veterans.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Orr; Bill Merifield, Veterans Legislative Coalition; Keith Sherman, Veterans Legislative Coalition; Hugh Moag, Evergreen College Veterans Support Group; Garth Coogan, Evergreen College Veterans Reservist Group; and Maureen Flak, National Guard Association.