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HOUSE BILL 2544

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State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Representatives Keiser, Schual-Berke, Santos, Haigh, Cox, Quall, Talcott, Murray, Poulsen, Stensen, Kenney, Regala, Ogden, Linville, Anderson, Conway, Constantine, Lantz, Edmonds, Ruderman, Cooper, Morris, Rockefeller, O'Brien, Kagi and Hurst

Read first time 01/17/2000. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to educator professional development; adding new  
2 sections to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

5 (a) Carefully targeted professional development is a critical  
6 component of the state's education reform efforts;

7 (b) Washington's teachers are required by the state to fund and  
8 complete college coursework in order to achieve and maintain  
9 professional certification;

10 (c) Many public school teachers, especially beginning teachers who  
11 are at the bottom of the salary schedule, need help funding the  
12 academic credits required to achieve and maintain professional  
13 certification; and

14 (d) Students, parents, and the local community benefit from the  
15 additional skills and knowledge acquired by teachers, so public-private  
16 partnerships could help teachers acquire the new skills and knowledge  
17 needed to enhance student learning and maintain professional  
18 certification.

1 (2) The legislature intends to assist the state's reform efforts  
2 and to help educators fund their required studies through a tuition  
3 reimbursement program targeted to coursework that helps a teacher gain  
4 skills and knowledge that enhance student learning of the state's  
5 essential academic learning requirements.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The educator tuition reimbursement program  
7 is created. The purpose of the program is to provide full or partial  
8 tuition reimbursement to public school teachers who take, as a  
9 requirement of professional or continuing certification, college  
10 courses designed to enhance student achievement of the state's  
11 essential academic learning requirements. The program shall be  
12 administered by the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** With funds provided for this purpose through  
14 appropriation or private donations, or provided through contributions  
15 to the fund established under section 4 of this act, the office of the  
16 superintendent of public instruction shall provide full or partial  
17 tuition reimbursement to any teacher employed in the common school  
18 system of the state, subject to the following requirements:

19 (1) For coursework completed at an institution of higher education  
20 as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, reimbursement shall be based on actual  
21 tuition and fees paid by the teacher for the coursework;

22 (2) For coursework completed at an institution of higher education  
23 as defined in RCW 28B.07.020(4), reimbursement shall be based on, and  
24 shall not exceed, the tuition and fees charged for comparable  
25 coursework at the University of Washington;

26 (3) The coursework must either apply toward any continuing or  
27 professional certification requirements adopted by the state board of  
28 education or be designed to help the teacher enhance student  
29 achievement of the state's academic learning requirements;

30 (4) Full reimbursement may be provided for coursework completed  
31 with a grade of 3.0 or more on a four-point grading scale;

32 (5) Partial reimbursement may be provided for coursework completed  
33 with a grade of 2.0 to 2.9 on a four-point grading scale and for  
34 coursework completed with a pass on a pass-fail grading scale; and

35 (6) No reimbursement may be provided for coursework that is not  
36 completed with at least a 2.0 on a four-point grading scale, or a pass  
37 on a pass-fail grading scale.

1        NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 4.**   The teacher tuition reimbursement trust fund  
2   is established in the custody of the state treasurer.   The trust fund  
3   shall be administered by the state treasurer.   Funds donated to help  
4   teachers fund their continuing education shall be deposited into the  
5   fund.   All moneys deposited in the fund shall be invested by the state  
6   treasurer.   All earnings of investments of balances of the trust fund  
7   shall be credited to the fund.   At the request of the office of the  
8   superintendent of public instruction, the treasurer shall disburse  
9   moneys from the trust fund to qualifying teachers.   No appropriation is  
10   required for expenditures from the trust fund.

11        NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 5.**   Sections 2 and 3 of this act are each added  
12   to chapter 28A.300 RCW.

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