
Higher Education Committee

HB 1077

Brief Description: Revising academic eligibility for the Washington promise scholarship program.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Rodne, Sells, Schual-Berke and Morrell; by request of Governor Locke.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expands eligibility for the Promise Scholarship program to the top 20 percent of each high school graduating class, rather than the top 15 percent.

Hearing Date: 2/1/05

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

The Washington Promise Scholarship program provides college scholarships to low and middle-income students in recognition of their academic achievement in high school. To qualify, students must meet the following criteria:

- Rank in the top 15 percent of their high school graduating class; or
- Earn a combined score of at least 1200 on the Scholastic Achievement Test or at least 27 on the American College Test; and
- Have a family income of less than 135 percent of the state median family income (\$89,600 for a family of four in 2004).

Each qualifying student may receive two consecutive annual awards to use at a public or independent higher education institution in Washington. The maximum award is equal to community college tuition. The actual award is determined by available funds and the number of eligible recipients. For the 2004-05 academic year, \$8.4 million supports 7,500 scholarship recipients. The current award is \$1,176, which is approximately 51 percent of community college tuition.

Summary of Bill:

Eligibility for the Promise Scholarship program is expanded to include the top 20 percent of each high school graduating class, rather than the top 15 percent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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