
SENATE BILL 5420

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Frockt, Murray, McAuliffe, Fraser, Ranker, Rolfes, Kline, Conway, and Chase

Read first time 01/29/13. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a two-year freeze on tuition rates at
2 four-year institutions of higher education; reenacting and amending RCW
3 28B.15.067; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that maintaining
6 an accessible, high quality public postsecondary system has far-
7 reaching benefits for the individual success of Washingtonians
8 throughout our state, as well as for a shared society as a whole.
9 Higher education not only opens the door to more jobs in today's
10 economy, it is also a key pillar of a working democracy and civilized
11 society.

12 (2) The legislature also finds that the state's declining
13 investment in its public institutions of higher education has
14 increasingly shifted the burden of the costs of undergraduate
15 postsecondary education to Washington students and families, who now
16 cover sixty-seven percent of costs through tuition. As undergraduate
17 resident tuition rates have skyrocketed in recent years, the state's
18 investments in student financial assistance have not kept pace with the
19 number of students qualifying for aid, a trend that has led to historic

1 rates of student loan debt throughout the state. The legislature
2 recognizes that the state now invests less in its public baccalaureate
3 institutions than it did twenty years ago. Since the 2007-2009
4 biennium, state funding for these public institutions has been cut by
5 forty-one percent. By the end of the 2011-2013 biennium, the state's
6 share of the cost of educating a student at public institutions of
7 higher education will have dropped from seventy-two percent a decade
8 ago to thirty-seven percent.

9 (3) It is the intent of the legislature to preserve broad access to
10 high quality postsecondary education opportunities throughout the state
11 and to begin to restore the funding balance between students and the
12 state.

13 (4) Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to freeze
14 tuition increases for Washington resident undergraduate students for
15 the 2013-2015 biennium, provided that no less than two hundred twenty-
16 five million dollars be appropriated and proportionally divided among
17 the six public baccalaureate institutions of higher education in
18 Washington state, for the purpose of offsetting revenue that would
19 otherwise be obtained by scheduled tuition increases.

20 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.15.067 and 2012 2nd sp.s. c 7 s 914 and 2012 c 228
21 s 6 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

22 (1) Tuition fees shall be established under the provisions of this
23 chapter.

24 (2) Beginning in the 2011-12 academic year, reductions or increases
25 in full-time tuition fees shall be as provided in the omnibus
26 appropriations act for resident undergraduate students at community and
27 technical colleges. The governing boards of the state universities,
28 regional universities, and The Evergreen State College; and the state
29 board for community and technical colleges may reduce or increase full-
30 time tuition fees for all students other than resident undergraduates,
31 including nonresident students, summer school students, and students in
32 other self-supporting degree programs. Percentage increases in full-
33 time tuition may exceed the fiscal growth factor. Except during the
34 2011-2013 fiscal biennium, the state board for community and technical
35 colleges may pilot or institute differential tuition models. The board
36 may define scale, scope, and rationale for the models.

1 (3)(a) Beginning with the 2011-12 academic year and through the end
2 of the 2014-15 academic year, except as provided in (b) of this
3 subsection, the governing boards of the state universities, the
4 regional universities, and The Evergreen State College may reduce or
5 increase full-time tuition fees for all students, including summer
6 school students and students in other self-supporting degree programs.
7 Percentage increases in full-time tuition fees may exceed the fiscal
8 growth factor. Reductions or increases may be made for all or portions
9 of an institution's programs, campuses, courses, or students; however,
10 during the 2011-2013 fiscal biennium, reductions or increases in
11 tuition must be uniform among resident undergraduate students.

12 (b) For the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years, if after accounting
13 for maintenance-level appropriations the sum of two hundred twenty-five
14 million dollars is appropriated from the general fund to be divided
15 among the state universities, the regional universities, and The
16 Evergreen State College in the 2013-2015 omnibus appropriations act,
17 each institution's full-time tuition fees for resident undergraduates
18 shall not exceed its 2012-13 academic year resident undergraduate
19 tuition levels.

20 (c) Prior to reducing or increasing tuition for each academic year,
21 the governing boards of the state universities, the regional
22 universities, and The Evergreen State College shall consult with
23 existing student associations or organizations with student
24 undergraduate and graduate representatives regarding the impacts of
25 potential tuition increases. Each governing board shall make public
26 its proposal for tuition and fee increases twenty-one days before the
27 governing board of the institution considers adoption and allow
28 opportunity for public comment. However, the requirement to make
29 public a proposal for tuition and fee increases twenty-one days before
30 the governing board considers adoption shall not apply if the omnibus
31 appropriations act has not passed the legislature by May 15th.
32 Governing boards shall be required to provide data regarding the
33 percentage of students receiving financial aid, the sources of aid, and
34 the percentage of total costs of attendance paid for by aid.

35 ((+e)) (d) Prior to reducing or increasing tuition for each
36 academic year, the state board for community and technical college
37 system shall consult with existing student associations or
38 organizations with undergraduate student representation regarding the

1 impacts of potential tuition increases. The state board for community
2 and technical colleges shall provide data regarding the percentage of
3 students receiving financial aid, the sources of aid, and the
4 percentage of total costs of attendance paid for by aid.

5 (4) Beginning with the 2015-16 academic year through the 2018-19
6 academic year, the governing boards of the state universities, regional
7 universities, and The Evergreen State College may set tuition for
8 resident undergraduates as follows:

9 (a) If state funding for a college or university falls below the
10 state funding provided in the operating budget for fiscal year 2011,
11 the governing board may increase tuition up to the limits set in (d) of
12 this subsection, reduce enrollments, or both;

13 (b) If state funding for a college or university is at least at the
14 level of state funding provided in the operating budget for fiscal year
15 2011, the governing board may increase tuition up to the limits set in
16 (d) of this subsection and shall continue to at least maintain the
17 actual enrollment levels for fiscal year 2011 or increase enrollments
18 as required in the omnibus appropriations act;

19 (c) If state funding is increased so that combined with resident
20 undergraduate tuition the sixtieth percentile of the total per-student
21 funding at similar public institutions of higher education in the
22 global challenge states under RCW 28B.15.068 is exceeded, the governing
23 board shall decrease tuition by the amount needed for the total per-
24 student funding to be at the sixtieth percentile under RCW 28B.15.068;
25 and

26 (d) The amount of tuition set by the governing board for an
27 institution under this subsection (4) may not exceed the sixtieth
28 percentile of the resident undergraduate tuition of similar public
29 institutions of higher education in the global challenge states.

30 (5) The tuition fees established under this chapter shall not apply
31 to high school students enrolling in participating institutions of
32 higher education under RCW 28A.600.300 through 28A.600.400.

33 (6) The tuition fees established under this chapter shall not apply
34 to eligible students enrolling in a dropout reengagement program
35 through an interlocal agreement between a school district and a
36 community or technical college under RCW 28A.175.100 through
37 28A.175.110.

1 (7) The tuition fees established under this chapter shall not apply
2 to eligible students enrolling in a community or technical college
3 participating in the pilot program under RCW 28B.50.534 for the purpose
4 of obtaining a high school diploma.

5 (8) Beginning in the 2019-20 academic year, reductions or increases
6 in full-time tuition fees for resident undergraduates at four-year
7 institutions of higher education shall be as provided in the omnibus
8 appropriations act.

9 (9) The legislative advisory committee to the committee on advanced
10 tuition payment established in RCW 28B.95.170 shall:

11 (a) Review the impact of differential tuition rates on the funded
12 status and future unit price of the Washington advanced college tuition
13 payment program; and

14 (b) No later than January 14, 2013, make a recommendation to the
15 appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the legislature regarding
16 how differential tuition should be addressed in order to maintain the
17 ongoing solvency of the Washington advanced college tuition payment
18 program.

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