

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5346

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government, Elections & Information Technology

Title: An act relating to creating a legislative page scholarship program.

Brief Description: Creating a legislative page scholarship program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Walsh, Rolfes, Zeiger, Hobbs, Warnick, Pedersen, Nelson, Darneille, Kuderer, Hunt, Keiser, McCoy, Honeyford, Fain, Liias, Cleveland, Sheldon, Conway, Pearson, Frockt, Wilson, Bailey and Hasegawa).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government, Elections & Information Technology: 3/15/17, 3/22/17 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by Committee)**

- Authorizes the creation of the Gina Grant Bull Memorial Legislative Page Scholarship program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, ELECTIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Koster, Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Gregerson, Irwin, Kraft and Pellicciotti.

Staff: Joan Elgee (786-7106).

Background:

The Legislative Page program (page program) was established in 1891. Pages are hired as employees during the legislative session and assist with the work of the Legislature by presenting flags, making deliveries, and performing other tasks. Interested youth must apply and gain sponsorship by a legislator to participate.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Ethics statutes prohibit public employees and officials from engaging in activities that pose a conflict of interest with regard to official duties. Exemptions allow officials to solicit gifts and various items of value for specified projects.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The Secretary of the Senate (Secretary) and Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives (Chief Clerk) may administer and conduct the Gina Grant Bull Memorial Legislative Page Scholarship program (Program). The Program should provide assistance to students, based on financial need, who qualify for the page program.

A Gina Grant Bull Memorial Legislative Page Scholarship Account (Account) is created. Only the Secretary, the Chief Clerk, or their designee may authorize expenditures from the Account.

The Secretary and Chief Clerk may solicit and accept gifts and other specified items of value for the Program, and may sell, lease, exchange, and expend donations as limited by the donors' terms. Legislators and legislative employees may also solicit the specified items of value for the Program. Monies solicited must be deposited in the Account and used only to establish and operate the Program. The Secretary and Chief Clerk must adopt joint rules to protect the receipt and expenditure of funds.

A section is added to the ethics laws to provide that the Secretary or Chief Clerk and their designees are not prohibited from soliciting and accepting contributions for the Account and that legislators and legislative employees are not prohibited from soliciting gifts for the Account.

The State Treasurer is charged with custody of the Account. The Account is added to the list of accounts that must receive their proportionate share of earnings. The Account is subject to allotment procedures, and an appropriation is not required.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

The striking amendment renames the Legislative Page Account the Gina Grant Bull Legislative Page Scholarship Account and makes a technical change to correct a cross-reference.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Gina Grant Bull was the epitome of a public servant and was revamping the page program when she passed away unexpectedly. This bill will provide funding for students who are unable to participate in the page program because of cost. The page program is excellent and the bill is a way to give students a civics lesson in Gina's memory. The Masons of Washington will help fund the page program.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Walsh, prime sponsor; and William C. Bart, Free and Accepted Masons of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.