

**RCW 28B.145.005 Finding—Intent.** The legislature finds that, despite increases in degree production, there remain acute shortages in high employer demand programs of study, particularly in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and health care fields of study. According to the workforce training and education coordinating board, seventeen percent of Washington businesses had difficulty finding job applicants in 2010. Eleven thousand employers did not fill a vacancy because they lacked qualified job applicants. Fifty-nine percent of projected job openings in Washington state from now until 2017 will require some form of postsecondary education and training.

It is the intent of the legislature to provide jobs and opportunity by making Washington the place where the world's most productive companies find the world's most talented people. The legislature intends to accomplish this through the creation of the opportunity scholarship and the opportunity expansion programs to: Help mitigate the impact of tuition increases; increase the number of professional-technical certificates, professional-technical degrees, baccalaureate degrees in high employer demand and other programs, and advanced degrees in health professions; and invest in programs and students to meet market demands for a knowledge-based economy while filling middle-income jobs with a sufficient supply of skilled workers. [2019 c 406 § 62. Prior: 2018 c 209 § 5; 2018 c 114 § 1; 2011 1st sp.s. c 13 § 1.]

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 406:** See note following RCW 43.79.195.

**Findings—Short title—2019 c 406:** See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

**Findings—2019 c 406:** See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 406:** See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 406:** See note following RCW 43.216.135.