

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1145

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION, APRIL 1, 1991

Brief Description: Revising provisions for the American Indian endowed scholarship program.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Jacobsen, Wood, Ogden, Sheldon, Paris, Jones, Basich, Wynne, Miller, Wineberry and Anderson).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Saling, Chairman; Patterson, Vice Chairman; Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Jesernig, Skratek, Stratton, and von Reichbauer.

Staff: Scott Huntley (786-7421)

Hearing Dates: March 27, 1991; April 1, 1991

BACKGROUND:

In 1990, the Legislature created the American Indian endowed scholarship program. The scholarships may be funded through a variety of sources, including the earnings on an endowment created when \$500,000 in state funds are matched with an equal amount of private donations.

The program is administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board. The board is responsible for collecting the private donations. With the assistance of a screening committee comprised of persons interested in the higher education of American Indian students, the board also selects the scholarship recipients. Financially needy American Indians who are enrolled full-time in an accredited Washington college or university are eligible for a scholarship if they are state residents and if they promise to use their education to benefit other American Indians. Upper division and graduate students receive a priority under the program. The board may also give a priority to students majoring in an area in which expertise is needed by the state's American Indians.

Although the legislation creating the program required that \$500,000 in state funds be matched with an equal amount of private donations, only \$250,000 for the state match was included in the 1990 supplemental budget. The state monies are placed in a trust fund until they are matched and can be transferred to the American Indian scholarship endowment fund. Any earnings on the trust fund remain in the trust fund.

SUMMARY:

The Higher Education Coordinating Board may request the transfer of state funds into the American Indian scholarship endowment fund when \$50,000 rather than \$500,000 in state funds is equally matched with private donations.

The board will not define American Indian. Instead, the criteria for selecting scholarship recipients is expanded. The criteria will assess a student's social and cultural ties to an American Indian community within the state.

Technical amendments are adopted to clarify that interest earned on the trust fund must be transferred to the endowment fund when state funds are deposited into the endowment fund.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

The bill will allow the scholarships to be used at an earlier date than it could at present. It will allow the program to begin with funds currently available without waiting for more state appropriations and a larger amount of private donations.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Augustine McCaffery, American Indian Advisory Committee
UW (pro)