
SENATE BILL 5344

State of Washington

56th Legislature

1999 Regular Session

By Senators Jacobsen, Shin, Eide, McAuliffe, Winsley, Thibaudeau, Gardner, Bauer, Haugen and Rasmussen

Read first time 01/20/1999. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to higher educational opportunities for children
2 who have been in foster care; adding a new section to chapter 28B.80
3 RCW; creating a new section; and making appropriations.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that access to a
6 higher education will give children who are in foster care hope for the
7 future. The legislature further finds that such assistance will help
8 these children become successful, productive, contributing citizens and
9 avoid the cycles of abuse, poverty, violence, and delinquency.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.80 RCW
11 to read as follows:

12 (1) The foster care scholarship program is created. The purpose of
13 the program is to help students who were in foster care attend an
14 institution of higher education in the state of Washington.

15 (2) To the extent funds are appropriated, the higher education
16 coordinating board shall award grants to eligible recipients to help
17 cover the costs of receiving a higher education at an institution of
18 higher education. The grant shall be in an amount not to exceed the

1 costs of obtaining a higher education, excluding tuition. The higher
2 education coordinating board shall establish procedures, by rule, to
3 disburse the awards as direct grants to students.

4 (3) To qualify for the grant, recipients shall be between the ages
5 of eighteen and twenty-three and have been in foster care in the state
6 of Washington for a minimum of six months since their fifteenth
7 birthday. Recipients must be eligible for financial aid under the
8 state student financial aid program. Recipients shall enter an
9 institution of higher education in Washington state within three years
10 of high school graduation and maintain an above-average rating.
11 Students are eligible to receive a maximum of eight semesters or twelve
12 quarters of grants for undergraduate study if they meet the age
13 requirements under this section. Students may transfer among in-state
14 public and independent colleges and universities in this state and
15 continue to receive the grant.

16 (4) No grant may be awarded to any student who is pursuing a degree
17 in theology.

18 (5) Grants under this section shall not affect eligibility for the
19 state student financial aid program.

20 (6) The higher education coordinating board shall work with the
21 department of social and health services and the superintendent of
22 public instruction to provide information about this program to
23 children in foster care in high schools in the state of Washington and
24 to persons over the age of eighteen who would be eligible for the
25 program.

26 (7) As used in this section, "public college or university" means
27 an institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

28 (8) As used in this section, "independent college or university"
29 means a private, nonprofit educational institution, the main campus of
30 which is permanently situated in the state, open to residents of the
31 state, providing programs of education beyond the high school level
32 leading at least to the baccalaureate degree, and accredited by the
33 Northwest association of schools and colleges as of the effective date
34 of this section, and other institutions as may be developed that are
35 approved by the higher education coordinating board as meeting
36 equivalent standards as those institutions accredited under this
37 section.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The sum of five hundred thousand
2 dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for
3 the fiscal year ending June 30, 2000, from the general fund to the
4 to carry out the purposes of this act.

5 (2) The sum of five hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as
6 may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30,
7 2001, from the general fund to the to carry out the purposes
8 of this act.

--- END ---