

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5969

---

**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to creating a civic education travel grant program.

**Brief Description:** Creating the civic education travel grant program.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kilmer, Delvin, Kastama, Shin, Kauffman, Marr, Murray, Kohl-Welles, Hobbs and Tom.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 3/22/07, 3/27/07 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates the Civic Education Travel Grant program to assist with travel costs for students participating in civic education competitions or events.

---

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Haigh, McDermott, Santos and P. Sullivan.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member and Roach.

**Staff:** Andrew Colvin (786-7304).

**Background:**

Organizations focused on civic engagement often organize competitions for students to promote civic education and responsibility. The competitions can be statewide, regional, national, or even international. Some students from Washington who enter these competitions locally and win are unable to advance because they cannot afford the travel costs to get to the statewide, regional, national, or international finals.

---

*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.*

**Summary of Bill:**

The Civic Education Travel Grant program will provide travel grants to students participating in statewide, regional, national, or international civic education competitions or events. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will allocate the grants, on a competitive basis, from private donations or with amounts appropriated for this specific purpose. The OSPI may accept gifts, grants, or endowments from public or private sources for the program and may spend any gifts, grants, endowments, or income from public or private sources according to their terms.

Students submitting grant applications must:

- be residents of Washington;
- use the grants to fund travel to civic education-based competitions or events;
- be participants in the civic education competition or event; and
- be under the age of 21 and not yet received their high school diploma.

Grant applications must include the following information:

- a brief description of the civic education competition or event;
- a brief description of what the applicant expects to learn from the competition or event;
- the total travel costs and how much the applicant is requesting from the program; and
- the total amount of matching funds the applicant has already secured or expects to secure.

Students are encouraged to seek matching funds, in-kind contributions, or other sources of support to supplement their travel expenses. The OSPI may adopt other criteria as appropriate for the review of grant proposals. Final grant awards may be for the full amount or a portion of the grant request.

---

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Each year, various civic education groups hold competitions and events for students. However, students who win in some of these competitions, and get the opportunity to move on to a regional or national event, often find that they are unable to continue with the next level of the competition because of travel expenses. We should encourage students to get a good civics education, and these programs and competitions add a new dimension to students' education. Civics and constitutional knowledge are lacking among our general population, and yet such knowledge is essential for our future leaders.

Students who live in more affluent communities may have an easier time raising money for travel costs, but these opportunities should also be available to students who happen to live in less affluent communities. This bill will help these types of programs expand to more schools, particularly in rural and low-income communities, and also provide extra support and encouragement to newer programs.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Kilmer, prime sponsor; Jonathan Dentler and Ken Brown, Gig Harbor High School; and Larry Little.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.