SENATE RESOLUTION

8618

By Senators Frockt, Kohl-Welles, Pedersen, Hobbs, Hatfield, Nelson, Mullet, Keiser, McCoy, Darneille, McAuliffe, Liias, Jayapal, Hasegawa, Cleveland, Chase, Billig, Conway, Rolfes, Fraser, and Fain

WHEREAS, Closing the opportunity gap and ensuring that every Washington child has a chance to succeed is the utmost duty of the Washington State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, A disproportionate number of students from communities of color, disadvantaged backgrounds, and rural or poor areas face major challenges with accessing higher education; and

WHEREAS, Higher education is increasingly necessary for students to get jobs in our new knowledge-intensive economy, and local employers are forced to recruit outside Washington to find employees with the appropriate skills; and

WHEREAS, Washington ranks 47th in the nation for student enrollment in college by age 19, and 42nd in college participation rates for students from low-income families; and

WHEREAS, The College Bound Scholarship program helps low-income middle school students aspire to postsecondary education and succeed academically by providing financial aid for college if they maintain their grades through high school; and

WHEREAS, Since the College Bound Scholarship was established in 2007, more than 212,000 students have signed up, and the scholarship has substantially contributed to increased high school graduation rates among participants by 15 to 19 percent statewide and by 30 percent in some regions; and

WHEREAS, The State Need Grant is Washington's major college financial aid program for low-income students; and

WHEREAS, Demand for the State Need Grant is far outpacing available resources—over 33,000 students eligible for the program were not able to access the aid in 2013-2014;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate honor students who have the College Bound Scholarship and students receiving State Need Grant aid as they continue to work hard and put themselves on the path to success in school and life; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate acknowledge that Washington must continue to support college access for low-income students in order to close opportunity gaps and increase our state's long-term competitiveness.

I, Hunter G. Goodman, Secretary of the Senate,

do hereby certify that this is a true and

correct copy of Senate Resolution 8618,

adopted by the Senate

February 17, 2015

HUNTER G. GOODMAN

Secretary of the Senate