

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SHB 2513

C 281 L 20
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Prohibiting the practice of transcript withholding and limiting the practice of registration holds at institutions of higher education as debt collection practices.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Slatter, Leavitt, Ortiz-Self, Valdez, Bergquist, Davis, J. Johnson, Pollet, Goodman, Lekanoff, Ormsby and Riccelli; by request of Lieutenant Governor).

House Committee on College & Workforce Development
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

Institutions of higher education may impose reasonable financing and late charges, as well as reasonable costs and expenses incurred in the collection of debts owed to the institution. If a student owes outstanding fees or charges to an institution, the institution may withhold the student's official transcripts and academic services.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act allows students to inspect and review their own education records, and requires colleges only to provide a student with an unofficial copy of the student's transcript. A college may indicate on the transcript that it is an unofficial copy.

Summary:

Institutions of higher education may only withhold a student's official transcripts for collecting debt related to unpaid tuition fees, room and board fees, fees charged to provide the official transcript, or any financial aid funds owed to the institution under federal financial aid programs due to miscalculation, withdrawal, misinformation, or other reason, not including standard repayment of student loans. An institution may not withhold an official transcript if the transcript is requested for a job application, transfer to another institution, financial aid application, pursuit of opportunities in the military or National Guard, or pursuit of other postsecondary opportunities.

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.

Institutions of higher education may only withhold a student's registration privileges as a debt collection tool for unpaid tuition fees, unpaid room and board fees, or any financial aid funds owed to the institution under federal financial aid programs due to miscalculation, withdrawal, misinformation, or other reason, not including standard student loan repayments.

Institutions of higher education that choose to withhold official transcripts or registration privileges as a tool for debt collection must disclose to students through a secure portal or electronic mail and the class registration process any debts owed by the student to the institution including the amount of debt, information on setting up a payment plan, and any consequences that will result from the nonpayment of the debt.

Beginning December 1, 2020, public institutions of higher education are required to report annually to the Governor and the Legislature on the use of transcript and registration holds, debt levels, and collection practices.

Votes on Final Passage:

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| House | 59 | 39 | |
| Senate | 36 | 13 | (Senate amended) |
| House | 59 | 38 | (House concurred) |

Effective: June 11, 2020