

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2019

As Reported by House Committee On:
Postsecondary Education & Workforce

Title: An act relating to establishing a Native American apprentice assistance program.

Brief Description: Establishing a Native American apprentice assistance program.

Sponsors: Representatives Stearns, Fosse, Berry, Ryu, Ramos, Ramel, Cortes, Morgan, Simmons, Reed, Ormsby, Peterson, Callan, Timmons, Kloba, Street, Donaghy, Gregerson, Orwall, Goodman, Ortiz-Self, Lekanoff, Riccelli, Reeves, Santos, Hackney, Pollet and Davis.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Postsecondary Education & Workforce: 1/16/24, 1/17/24, 1/19/24 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the Native American Apprentice Assistance Program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Slatter, Chair; Entenman, Vice Chair; Reed, Vice Chair; Ybarra, Ranking Minority Member; Waters, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Klicker, Leavitt, Nance, Paul, Pollet and Timmons.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Jacobsen and Schmidt.

Staff: Elizabeth Allison (786-7129).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Office of Student Financial Assistance.

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (Office) operates within the Washington Student Achievement Council. The Office administers state and federal financial aid and other education service programs.

Financial Aid Applications.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a federal financial aid application used to determine a student's eligibility for federal financial aid.

Summary of Bill:

Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the Native American Apprentice Assistance Program (Program) is established. The Office must administer the Program. Administration duties include publicizing the Program, awarding assistance to eligible participants, and adopting rules and guidelines for the Program in consultation with tribes and state-registered apprenticeship programs. The Office must determine awarding priorities and award amounts. Funding must be prioritized to cover any tuition costs for related supplemental instruction, and additional funding may be used to cover required supplies, tools, materials, work clothing, and living expenses.

To be eligible, a participant must be a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe located within the United States, must file a FAFSA, and must be enrolled in a state-registered apprenticeship program.

The Native American Apprentice Assistance Account (Account) is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. All receipts for the Program must be deposited in the Account and expenditures may only be used for the Program. Only the Director of the Office may authorize expenditures from the Account.

The Office must submit a report on the Program to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature beginning December 1, 2025. The report must include:

- the total number of eligible participants and the number of participants who received a grant;
- the amount that the Office determined the grant amount to be;
- how the Office determined what the grant amount should be; and
- how many members of federally recognized Indian tribes in Washington received a grant versus members of federally recognized Indian tribes from other states.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains multiple effective dates. Please see the bill.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Historically, Native American folks have struggled with living conditions, health conditions, and lack of education. When Native American people signed treaties with the federal government, they were guaranteed education in exchange for their land. It has not worked out this way. Historically, Native American people have experienced barriers to getting employment and education. This bill is about creating job opportunities, building a workforce, and strengthening tribal self-sufficiency and governance. The Tulalip Tribe is a federally recognized successor to the tribes who signed the Treaty at Point Elliott. The Tulalip Tribe supports this bill. The state needs to put more resources into assuring that tribal communities have resources to pursue apprenticeships and trades. The Tulalip Tribal Office runs a free program that introduces youth to the construction trade, and this bill will help provide skilled labor to meet shortages. Apprentices are often recruited from no- to low-wage jobs or corrections. These folks are already struggling financially, and they do start making a wage as an apprentice, but they also need money for expenses like work materials and food. This bill will help them get what they need to be comfortable and make the transition to the trades more smoothly. There is already a fund to help Native American folks get to college. This fund to help them get into trades would be appropriate because college is not for everyone. This gives folks a way to get a job.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Chris Stearns, prime sponsor; Charles Adkins, The Tulalip Tribes; and Heather Kurtenbach, Ironworkers Local 86.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Andrew Vander Stoep, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 191