
HOUSE BILL 2070

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representatives Timmons, Lekanoff, Ramel, Rule, Parshley, Scott, and Pollet

Read first time 04/04/25. Referred to Committee on Postsecondary Education & Workforce.

1 AN ACT Relating to state funding parity for Western Washington
2 University; adding a new section to chapter 28B.35 RCW; and creating
3 a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that Western
6 Washington University has received the lowest funding on a per-
7 student basis for much of the last three decades. Despite strong
8 enrollment, retention, and graduation rates, students at Western
9 Washington University bear the greatest cost of their education
10 compared with students at other public universities and community and
11 technical colleges in Washington. The legislature finds that
12 Washington has a postsecondary educational attainment crisis, with
13 less than half of graduating high school seniors participating in
14 postsecondary education. The majority, 70 percent, of family-wage
15 jobs in Washington require a bachelor's degree and this trend is
16 projected to continue. Over the next decade, Washington will need
17 nearly 300,000 more workers with bachelor's degrees. The legislature
18 recognizes the important role of regional comprehensive universities
19 in supporting the education of Washington residents and seeks to
20 rectify the historical per-student funding disparity.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.35
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 (1) Beginning with the 2029-2031 biennium omnibus appropriations
4 act, the legislature shall appropriate to Western Washington
5 University an amount for state funding parity, according to the
6 methodology calculated in subsection (2) of this section.

7 (2)(a) The carryforward level funding average from near general
8 fund outlook accounts must be divided by the number of full-time
9 equivalent students from state-supported academic programs for the
10 prior fiscal year for each regional university and state college. The
11 legislature must calculate this ratio at the beginning of every odd-
12 numbered year.

13 (b) If Western Washington University has the lowest calculated
14 ratio, an appropriation in the omnibus appropriations act must be
15 made that is at least equal to the difference from Western Washington
16 University's ratio and the next lowest regional university or state
17 college.

18 (c) If the Western Washington University ratio is not the lowest
19 of the regional universities and state college, no appropriation will
20 be made in accordance with this section.

21 (3) For purposes of this section, the following definitions
22 apply:

23 (a) "Carryforward level" means a projected expenditure level for
24 each biennial budget before maintenance level changes are made, which
25 is mechanically calculated after each session in an even-numbered
26 year by adjusting current appropriations to be ongoing or one-time
27 based on the previous biennium's enacted budget;

28 (b) "Regional universities" are those designated in RCW
29 28B.35.010; and

30 (c) "State college" means The Evergreen State College in Thurston
31 county.

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