
SENATE BILL 5639

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Christian, Chapman, Dozier, Harris, Hasegawa, Lovick, Short, Torres, Warnick, and J. Wilson

Read first time 02/03/25. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to tuition and fee waivers at public institutions
2 of higher education for children of murdered parents; and amending
3 RCW 28B.15.380 and 28B.15.520; creating a new section; and providing
4 an expiration date.

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

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.15.380 and 2019 c 144 s 1 are each amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (1) Subject to the limitations of RCW 28B.15.910, the governing
9 boards of the state universities, the regional universities, and The
10 Evergreen State College shall exempt the following students from the
11 payment of all tuition fees and services and activities fees:

12 ~~((1))~~ (a) Children of any law enforcement officer as defined in
13 chapter 41.26 RCW, firefighter as defined in chapter 41.26 or 41.24
14 RCW, highway worker, or Washington state patrol officer who lost his
15 or her life or became totally disabled in the line of duty while
16 employed by any public law enforcement agency or full-time or
17 volunteer fire department in this state, or was a highway worker
18 while either employed by a general contractor or subcontractor, on a
19 transportation project or employed by a transportation agency:
20 PROVIDED, That such persons may receive the exemption only if they
21 begin their course of study at a state-supported college or

1 university within (~~ten~~) 10 years of their graduation from high
2 school; (~~and~~

3 ~~(2)~~) (b) Children of a parent who was a victim of a homicide,
4 who were a resident of the state at the time the homicide of the
5 parent occurred, and who were subsequently subject to a dependency
6 proceeding pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW: PROVIDED, That such persons
7 may receive the exemption at a state-supported college or university
8 for a total of six academic years. For purposes of this subsection
9 (1)(b), homicide has the same meaning as defined in RCW 9A.32.010;
10 and

11 (c) Surviving spouses of any law enforcement officer as defined
12 in chapter 41.26 RCW, firefighter as defined in chapter 41.26 or
13 41.24 RCW, highway worker, or Washington state patrol officer who
14 lost his or her life or became totally disabled in the line of duty
15 while employed by any public law enforcement agency or full-time or
16 volunteer fire department in this state, or was a highway worker
17 while either employed by a general contractor or subcontractor, on a
18 transportation project or employed by a transportation agency.

19 ~~((3))~~ (2) The governing boards of the state universities, the
20 regional universities, and The Evergreen State College shall report
21 to the education data center on the annual cost of tuition fees and
22 services and activities fees waived for surviving spouses and
23 children under this section. The education data center shall
24 consolidate the reports of the waived fees and annually report to the
25 appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature.

26 ~~((4))~~ (3) As used in this section, "transportation agency"
27 means any agency, department, or division of a municipal corporation,
28 political subdivision, or other unit of local government in this
29 state, and any agency, department, or division of state government,
30 having as its primary function the construction and maintenance of
31 the highways and roads within the state of Washington. Such an
32 agency, department, or division is distinguished from a transit
33 agency having as one of its functions the highway maintenance(~~7~~)
34 including, but not limited to, the state department of
35 transportation. A transportation agency under this section does not
36 include a government contractor.

37 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.15.520 and 2015 c 55 s 217 are each amended to
38 read as follows:

1 Subject to the limitations of RCW 28B.15.910, the governing
2 boards of the community and technical colleges:

3 (1) May waive all or a portion of tuition fees and services and
4 activities fees for students (~~nineteen~~) 19 years of age or older
5 who are eligible for resident tuition and fee rates as defined in RCW
6 28B.15.012 through 28B.15.015, who enroll in a course of study or
7 program which will enable them to finish their high school education
8 and obtain a high school diploma or certificate, but who are not
9 eligible students as defined by RCW 28A.600.405;

10 (2)(a) Shall waive all of tuition fees and services and
11 activities fees for:

12 (i) Children of any law enforcement officer as defined in chapter
13 41.26 RCW, firefighter as defined in chapter 41.26 or 41.24 RCW, or
14 Washington state patrol officer who lost his or her life or became
15 totally disabled in the line of duty while employed by any public law
16 enforcement agency or full time or volunteer fire department in this
17 state: PROVIDED, That such persons may receive the waiver only if
18 they begin their course of study at a community or technical college
19 within (~~ten~~) 10 years of their graduation from high school; (~~and~~)

20 (ii) Children of a parent who was a victim of a homicide, who
21 were a resident of the state at the time the homicide of the parent
22 occurred, and who were subsequently subject to a dependency
23 proceeding pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW: PROVIDED, That such persons
24 may receive the exemption at a state-supported college or university
25 for a total of six academic years. For purposes of this subsection
26 (2)(a)(ii), homicide has the same meaning as defined in RCW
27 9A.32.010; and

28 (iii) Surviving spouses of any law enforcement officer as defined
29 in chapter 41.26 RCW, firefighter as defined in chapter 41.26 or
30 41.24 RCW, or Washington state patrol officer who lost his or her
31 life or became totally disabled in the line of duty while employed by
32 any public law enforcement agency or full time or volunteer fire
33 department in this state.

34 (b) For the purposes of this section, "totally disabled" means a
35 person who has become totally and permanently disabled for life by
36 bodily injury or disease, and is thereby prevented from performing
37 any occupation or gainful pursuit.

38 (c) The governing boards of the community and technical colleges
39 shall report to the state board for community and technical colleges
40 on the annual cost of tuition fees and services and activities fees

1 waived for surviving spouses and children under (a) of this
2 subsection. The state board for community and technical colleges
3 shall consolidate the reports of the waived fees and annually report
4 to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature;
5 and

6 (3) May waive all or a portion of the nonresident tuition fees
7 differential for:

8 (a) Nonresident students enrolled in a community or technical
9 college course of study or program which will enable them to finish
10 their high school education and obtain a high school diploma or
11 certificate but who are not eligible students as defined by RCW
12 28A.600.405. The waiver shall be in effect only for those courses
13 which lead to a high school diploma or certificate; and

14 (b) Up to (~~forty~~) 40 percent of the students enrolled in the
15 regional education program for deaf students, subject to federal
16 funding of such program.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The Washington state institute for
18 public policy shall study the impact on children whose parent was a
19 victim of a homicide and were subsequently subject to a dependency
20 proceeding pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW. The study must explore the
21 following for children whose parent was a victim of homicide, before
22 and after the enactment of the tuition waiver established in this
23 act:

- 24 (a) Educational outcomes, including enrollment and persistence;
- 25 (b) Health outcomes; and
- 26 (c) Incidents with the law.

27 (2) The Washington state institute for public policy shall
28 complete the final report that evaluates the effect of tuition
29 waivers for the impacted children by December 1, 2035. A preliminary
30 report, which may provide any issues with data collection, is due by
31 December 1, 2031.

32 (3) This section expires July 1, 2036.

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