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HOUSE BILL 2615

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State of Washington                      63rd Legislature                      2014 Regular Session

By Representatives Pike and Magendanz

Read first time 01/22/14. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to modifying the requirements for renewing state  
2 need grants; and amending RCW 28B.92.060.

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

4            **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.92.060 and 2012 c 229 s 558 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6            In awarding need grants, the office shall proceed substantially as  
7 follows: PROVIDED, That nothing contained herein shall be construed to  
8 prevent the office, in the exercise of its sound discretion, from  
9 following another procedure when the best interest of the program so  
10 dictates:

11            (1) The office shall annually select the financial aid award  
12 recipients from among Washington residents applying for student  
13 financial aid who have been ranked according to:

14            (a) Financial need as determined by the amount of the family  
15 contribution; and

16            (b) Other considerations, such as whether the student is a former  
17 foster youth, or is a placebound student who has completed an associate  
18 of arts or associate of science degree or its equivalent.

1 (2) The financial need of the highest ranked students shall be met  
2 by grants depending upon the evaluation of financial need until the  
3 total allocation has been disbursed. Funds from grants which are  
4 declined, forfeited or otherwise unused shall be reawarded until  
5 disbursed, except that eligible former foster youth shall be assured  
6 receipt of a grant. The office, in consultation with four-year  
7 institutions of higher education, the council, and the state board for  
8 community and technical colleges, shall develop award criteria and  
9 methods of disbursement based on level of need, and not solely rely on  
10 a first-come, first-served basis.

11 (3) A student shall be eligible to receive a state need grant for  
12 up to ~~((five))~~ four years, or the credit or clock hour equivalent of  
13 ~~((five))~~ four years, or up to one hundred twenty-five percent of the  
14 published length of time of the student's program. A student may not  
15 start a new associate degree program as a state need grant recipient  
16 until at least five years have elapsed since earning an associate  
17 degree as a need grant recipient, except that a student may earn two  
18 associate degrees concurrently. Qualifications for renewal will  
19 include maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward completion of  
20 an eligible program as determined by the office and maintaining at  
21 least a 2.75 grade point average for all students except those  
22 attending The Evergreen State College. Students enrolled at The  
23 Evergreen State College must meet the requirements of the college's  
24 satisfactory academic progress policy for state financial aid to remain  
25 qualified. Should the recipient terminate his or her enrollment for  
26 any reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant  
27 shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by the  
28 institution according to the institution's own policy for issuing  
29 refunds, except as provided in RCW 28B.92.070.

30 (4) In computing financial need, the office shall determine a  
31 maximum student expense budget allowance, not to exceed an amount equal  
32 to the total maximum student expense budget at the public institutions  
33 plus the current average state appropriation per student for operating  
34 expense in the public institutions. Any child support payments  
35 received by students who are parents attending less than half-time  
36 shall not be used in computing financial need.

37 (5)(a) A student who is enrolled in three to six credit-bearing

1 quarter credits, or the equivalent semester credits, may receive a  
2 grant for up to one academic year before beginning a program that leads  
3 to a degree or certificate.

4 (b) An eligible student enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis  
5 shall receive a prorated portion of his or her state need grant for any  
6 academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a less-than-full-time  
7 basis, as long as funds are available.

8 (c) An institution of higher education may award a state need grant  
9 to an eligible student enrolled in three to six credit-bearing quarter  
10 credits, or the semester equivalent, on a provisional basis if:

11 (i) The student has not previously received a state need grant from  
12 that institution;

13 (ii) The student completes the required free application for  
14 federal student aid;

15 (iii) The institution has reviewed the student's financial  
16 condition, and the financial condition of the student's family if the  
17 student is a dependent student, and has determined that the student is  
18 likely eligible for a state need grant; and

19 (iv) The student has signed a document attesting to the fact that  
20 the financial information provided on the free application for federal  
21 student aid and any additional financial information provided directly  
22 to the institution is accurate and complete, and that the student  
23 agrees to repay the institution for the grant amount if the student  
24 submitted false or incomplete information.

25 (6) As used in this section, "former foster youth" means a person  
26 who is at least eighteen years of age, but not more than twenty-four  
27 years of age, who was a dependent of the department of social and  
28 health services at the time he or she attained the age of eighteen.

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