



ASWWU Resolution Opposing SB 5785

A RESOLUTION OF THE ASWWU Government, IN OPPOSITION TO SB 5785

Whereas Senator June Robinson has introduced a bill into the Washington State Legislature, and the official title is “SB 5785 Modifying students’ share of the education costs at institutions of higher education.”¹;

Whereas SB 5785 would allow all Washington State colleges and universities to increase in-state tuition 5% above the average annual growth rate for median hourly wages over the last 14 years². Using the 2025-26 school year, for example, this would enable an extra 5% above the 3.3% increase in mean hourly wages resulting in a total increase up to 8.3%³;

Whereas SB 5785 would allow all Washington State colleges and universities to increase out-of-state tuition, however much is necessary to operate the school²;

Whereas SB 5785 changes the entire carefully negotiated structure of the Washington College Grant and decreases award amounts for every recipient above 25% median family income (MFI)². Currently you can receive the Washington College Grant in full up to 65% MFI and in part up to 100% MFI⁴;

Whereas the title being "Modifying students' share of the education costs at institutions of higher education"² forces the onus of funding higher education attainment onto students and families;

Whereas the Washington College Grant is a nationally recognized program, which served 4,352 students at Western Washington University in the 2022-2023 school year⁵;

Whereas SB 5785 undoes a decade of work by both the Washington Student Association and the Washington State Legislature on increasing access to financial aid and lowering the cost of attending institutions of higher education;

¹ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/BillSummary/?BillNumber=5785&Year=2025&Initiative=false>

² <https://lawfilesexternal.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2025-26/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Bills/5785.pdf?q=20250307104423>

³

<https://ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/legacy/agencycommunications/FY2025/College%20Affordability%20Plan%20Tuition%20Growth%20Rate%20for%202025-26%20Academic%20Year.pdf>

⁴ <https://wsac.wa.gov/wcg-awards>

⁵ <https://erdc.wa.gov/publications-and-reports/statewide-public-four-year-dashboard>

Whereas increasing tuition and decreasing access to financial aid disproportionately affects low-income students;

Whereas SB 5785 would strip financial aid from over 18,000 students and would decrease financial aid for around 50,000 students in Washington State⁶;

Whereas increasing the cost of attending institutions of higher education would decrease enrollment; and

Whereas lower enrollment will make it more difficult to achieve the target of 70% post-secondary credential attainment. Further hampering the state's workforce and economy; now, therefore, be it

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Associated Students of Western Washington University:

1. Urges the Washington State Legislature not to adopt SB 5785;
2. Urges the Western Washington University Administration to join the ASWWU in opposing SB 5785.

PASSED BY THE ASWWU EXECUTIVE BOARD AT A MEETING THEREOF THIS MARCH 11th, 2025.

PASSED BY THE ASWWU SENATE AT A MEETING THEREOF THIS MARCH 12th, 2025.

⁶ https://cfc.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Monitoring/WSAC_WCG_Courtesy.xlsx