
Postsecondary Education & Workforce Committee

HB 2148

Brief Description: Creating the pay it forward program.

Sponsors: Representatives Reed, Parshley, Dufault, Ramel, Berry, Cortes, Zahn, Scott, Goodman, Hill and Pollet.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates the Pay it Forward Program to provide tuition assistance to graduate students.
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Hearing Date: 1/14/26

Staff: Saranda Ross (786-7068).

Background:

The federal graduate PLUS loan program, which provides loans to graduate and professional students, will be eliminated on July 1, 2026. Graduate students will also have an annual direct loan limit of \$20,500 and an aggregate loan limit of \$100,000. The Washington State Opportunity Scholarship (WSOS) provides support to nurse practitioners practicing in medically underserved areas in the state.

Summary of Bill:

The Pay it Forward Program (Program) is established to provide graduate students funds for tuition and fees, less any awards received through state financial aid, for up to four years or the credit or clock hour equivalent, or up to 125 percent of the published length of their program. Participants must sign a binding contract to make contributions to the Program beginning one

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year following graduation or discontinuation of their graduate degree program.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) is tasked with developing and administering the Program. In determining the amount and length of time participants contribute to the Program, the WSAC must apply the following criteria:

- Participants who attended University of Washington or Washington State University may not be required to contribute more than five percent of their income.
- Participants who attended Western Washington University at Bellingham, Central Washington University at Ellensburg, Eastern Washington University at Cheney, or the Evergreen State College may not be required to contribute more than 3.5 percent of their income.
- Participants must make contributions in proportion to the number of credits for which the participant was registered while participating in the Program.
- Participants may not be required to make contributions longer than 15 years.

The Pay it Forward Trust Fund Account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer to ensure disbursements from the account are made available to participants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 9, 2026.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.