



**House  
Legislative  
Analysis  
Section**

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JUN 28 1990

## ELIGIBILITY FOR MI WORK-STUDY PROGRAM

**House Bill 4857 as enrolled**  
**Third Analysis (4-19-90)**

**Sponsor: Rep. Mary C. Brown**  
**House Committee: Colleges & Universities**  
**Senate Committee: Education & Mental Health**

### ***THE APPARENT PROBLEM:***

Public Act 288 of 1986 created the Michigan work-study (MWS) program, patterned after a federal work-study program and administered by the Michigan Higher Education Assistance Authority (MHEAA), which provides funds to degree-granting postsecondary schools for use in creating work-study opportunities for students. A work-study allows a student to supplement other financial aid by working on or near campus during the school year, without having to incur additional debt from student loans. The act, however, does not allow a student who works under the program to continue working (and earning money for school) during various school breaks, such as over the summer or during the holiday season. This apparently is inconsistent with the college work-study program (CWS is the federal counterpart to MWS), which allows students who intend to return to school after a break to continue working at their CWS job during the break. Some feel making the state program consistent with the federal program would prevent confusion among students applying for either or both programs, and would give students more opportunity to earn money under the program when school was not actually in session.

### ***THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:***

The bill would amend Public Act 288 of 1986 to specify that a student could participate in the MWS program during a period when he or she was not enrolled at an eligible postsecondary school if all of the following were true:

- The student was otherwise eligible under the program;
- The student had been enrolled in at least a half-time undergraduate program of study at an eligible institution for the preceding quarter, term, or semester; and
- The postsecondary school's financial aid officer determined that the period during which the student was not enrolled would not exceed 4 months and the student had enrolled or signed an intent to enroll in at least a half-time undergraduate program of study at the school for the next succeeding quarter, term, or semester.

The act currently specifies various criteria for a nonprofit employer to meet in order to employ students under the MWS program. One of the criteria specifies that the employer cannot employ MWS students to work on or at a facility used for sectarian instruction or for religious worship, or for activities espousing a particular political or moral position. The bill would amend this to specify that work which involved "promoting a partisan political position or candidate" would not qualify under the act.

The act also requires a for-profit employer to meet certain criteria in order to be eligible to employ students through the MWS program, one of which is that an employer must enter into a signed agreement with an eligible postsecondary school to provide employment "which is

directly related to the students' academic fields." The bill, instead, specifies that an employer would have to provide employment that was determined by the school to be "academically relevant".

MCL 390.1374, et al.

### ***FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:***

According to the Senate Fiscal Agency, the bill would not affect state expenditures. (3-7-90)

### ***ARGUMENTS:***

#### ***For:***

The bill would permit MWS students, like their CWS counterparts, to continue working and earning financial aid over a school break (i.e. during summer or the holidays) under the MWS program. Adding this language to the act would coordinate the state program with the federal program to the benefit of students and the MHEAA, the administrator of both programs.

***Response:*** While the bill would allow the MWS program to parallel the federal program, there could be a conflict with Public Act 303 of 1986, which established the state's work-study graduate program. Changes made under the bill for the MWS program should also be made to Public Act 303 for the graduate work-study program to avoid a variance in administration of the two.

#### ***For:***

Currently a for-profit employer may participate in the program if the employer signs an agreement to provide work that is "directly related" to a student's academic field. The bill would provide for a school to determine whether the work was "academically relevant" for a student to qualify. This could result in expanded employment opportunities in the private sector for work-study students.

#### ***Against:***

Under the bill a student could participate in the program while not enrolled in school for a period of time if he or she met certain conditions, including having enrolled or signed an intent to enroll in at least a half-time program at a school for the following quarter, term, or semester. Despite a signed agreement to attend, some students might not return to classes as anticipated after they worked under the program during a period when they were not enrolled in classes.

H.B. 4857 (4-19-90)