



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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PUBLIC SERVICE WORK-STUDY PROGRAM

House Bill 5441

Sponsor: Rep. H. Lynn Jondahl
Committee: Colleges & Universities

Complete to 3-16-90

6-11-90

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5441 AS INTRODUCED 2-6-90

The bill would create the Public Service Work-Study Act to establish a public service work-study (PSWS) employment program and a public service student volunteer program for students who worked in specific areas, including recycling or environmental protection, food banks, homeless shelters, or mental health programs and who were attending qualified postsecondary schools. The Michigan Higher Education Assistance Authority would administer the programs.

Eligible Postsecondary Schools. The PSWS employment program would be established to fund up to the full amount of an eligible student's wages in part-time public service employment and to enable postsecondary schools to help eligible students meet school expenses through placement in a qualified work-study while attending school. Postsecondary schools eligible to participate would have to be degree-granting, approved by the State Board of Education, and could not have instructional programs that were composed solely of sectarian instruction or religious worship. Also, a school would have to participate in the federal work-study program under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. A participating school could offer academic credit to students enrolled in the program.

Student Eligibility. A student could participate in the PSWS program if he or she:

- lived in the state continuously for the 12 months preceding his or her PSWS application and was not considered a resident of another state;
- was not incarcerated in a corrections institute;
- had enrolled in at least a half-time undergraduate program of study at an eligible school or had possessed a degree at a specific academic level and then enrolled for a second degree "at the same or lower academic level" (as conditioned in the bill);
- was a U.S. citizen or permanent resident;
- was not in default on a loan guaranteed by the authority; and
- was certified by the financial aid officer at the qualified school as needing employment in order to meet recognized educational expenses.

Volunteer Program. The public service student volunteer program would be established to provide reimbursement for necessary expenses incurred by eligible students who worked on a volunteer basis in activities that would be considered public service work if performed as an employee.

The authority would administer the volunteer program in cooperation with other appropriate public and private agencies and would reimburse an eligible student for transportation, equipment, uniforms, food, and other necessary expenses incurred in providing services for a public service employer if:

- The student was not paid, nor was expecting wages, for services provided;
- The student voluntarily performed the services;
- Performed services would be considered public service employment if the student performed them as an employee; and
- The public service employer certified to the authority that the student had performed the services and that expenses subject to reimbursement were necessarily incurred by the student in doing the work.

In addition, a student would have to meet all of the requirements for qualifying under the PSWS program (except for being certified by a school's financial aid officer as needing employment to meet school expenses) in order to qualify under the volunteer program. The amount of expenses reimbursed under the volunteer program could not exceed \$1,500 per academic year for each participating student, and the authority could set a lower maximum amount for a given academic year if it determined a lower amount was necessary due to the amount of funds appropriated for the program for that year.

Continued Eligibility. A student would have to maintain satisfactory academic progress, as defined by the school attended, to remain eligible for participation in the PSWS or public service volunteer programs. A full-time undergraduate student could not participate in either program for more than 15 terms, or its equivalent in semesters, at a given school. If a student possessing a degree at a given academic level enrolled for a second degree "at the same or lower academic level," the authority would include PSWS grants received by the student when enrolled for the previous degree at the same or lower level to determine the student's eligibility.

Eligibility During Non-Enrollment. A student could participate in either program during a period when he or she was not enrolled at an eligible school if:

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

Employer Eligibility. A public service employer would be eligible to employ students through the PSWS program if the employer:

- entered into a signed agreement with an eligible school to provide qualified public service work for students recommended by the school;
- employed PSWS students only for public service employment;

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- did not use PSWS students to displace employed workers;
- did not employ PSWS students to construct, operate, or maintain a facility used, or to be used, solely for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship, nor for activity espousing a partisan political position or candidate; and
- did not pay PSWS students a wage that was less than the full federal minimum wage established for employees more than 19 years old.

Determination, Use of Program Funds. The amount of a PSWS grant to be paid for a semester, trimester, or quarter would be determined by the authority based on an evaluation of the financial resources of a student's family. A uniform criteria of need, defined by the authority, would be used in evaluating a family's financial resources. A student who received other student financial aid in the form of a scholarship or grant could qualify for PSWS funds if the total amount of other financial aid was less than the student's remaining financial need.

The PSWS grant, combined with other student aid, could not exceed a student's total financial need as determined by uniform criteria defined by the authority, nor could a grant exceed the amount of school costs for a full academic year. If appropriated PSWS program funds were not enough to provide each student with the grant amount for which he or she was eligible, a maximum grant level would be established for that academic year by the authority. PSWS program funds could only be used to pay up to 100 percent of student wages, and could not be used for administrative costs related to implementing or operating an eligible school's PSWS program.

Other Provisions. The authority would have to promulgate rules to implement the bill's provisions pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act.