

WMU may fail governor's challenge

Bill amendment could cause university to exceed tuition hike limit

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Editor in Chief

A simple sentence amended into a state appropriations bill may result in complex problems for Western Michigan University's financial future.

The amendment modifies a part of the state higher education appropriations bill — section 436 of Senate Bill No. 1067 — to redefine the working definition of higher-education fees. The change, which passed the state House of Representatives, is one point of discussion in a legislative conference committee before the final

appropriations bill is voted by the legislature and sent to Gov. Jennifer Granholm for signature.

The amendment states: "As used in this section, 'fee' means any fee that will be paid by more than half of all resident undergraduate students at least once during their enrollment at a state university."

If ultimately approved, the revised definition could push the state's estimate of WMU's total tuition and fee increases above the rate of inflation, thus eliminating expected financial incentives for

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\$\$\$ The Potential Impact \$\$\$

If the records initiation fee is refunded:
\$2.8 million

If WMU loses its tuition restraint incentive:
\$10 million to \$15 million

Estimates based on Fall 2003 WMU enrollment data.