

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2843

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to regional universities.

Brief Description: Creating the Cascadia State University at Bothell.

Sponsors: Representatives Sommers, Kenney, Cox, Fromhold, Sehlin, Priest, Chase, McCoy, Ormsby and Lantz.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/27/04, 2/4/04 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Effective July 1, 2005, establishes the University of Washington Bothell as a campus with the mission of a comprehensive university, including lower and upper-division programs.
- Directs the University of Washington to convene a work group to address transition issues and report on progress by December 15, 2004.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Kenney, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Cox, Ranking Minority Member; Priest, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt, Condotta, Jarrett, McCoy, Morrell and Ormsby.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Chase.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

In 1989, the Legislature authorized creation of five higher education branch campuses as part of the state's research universities. The University of Washington (UW) was directed to operate one branch campus in the Bothell-Woodinville area. The campus

initially operated out of leased space in Bothell. Branch campuses offer only upper division and graduate level courses.

In December 1992, outgoing Governor Gardner proposed creation of a new four-year regional university in Bothell: Cascade University. The 1993 Legislature instead directed the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to study alternative organizational models for meeting the higher education and workforce training needs of North King and South Snohomish Counties. In its report, the HECB supported creation of both a new community college and continued development of the UW branch campus collocated on a single campus.

The 1994 Legislature directed the UW Bothell campus to be collocated with a new community college: Cascadia Community College (Cascadia). The new campus opened in Fall 2000 and Cascadia began enrolling students at that time.

The UW Bothell currently enrolls 1,190 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. About one-third of the students are enrolled in an Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences program at the undergraduate level. Significant numbers of students are also enrolled in business and computer and software systems. The UW Bothell also offers nursing degrees at the undergraduate and graduate level and master's degree and teaching certificate programs in education. Two-thirds of students transfer from community colleges. About one-fifth transfer from the main campus in Seattle.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Effective July 1, 2005, the UW Bothell is established as a campus with a distinct mission to offer lower and upper-division undergraduate and graduate education programs through the master's degree. Programs include those of a practical and applied nature that are directed to the educational and professional needs of the region's residents. The campus is to act as a receiving institution for transferring community and technical college students and provide extended occupational and complementary studies programs. This mission is the same as the mission established in law for the state's three regional universities.

The UW Bothell will no longer be considered a branch campus. The only UW branch campus is in Tacoma.

The UW must convene a work group including main campus and Bothell campus representatives, the HECB, and the Office of Financial Management to address implementation issues associated with the new designation, such as the phase-in of lower division courses, an enrollment plan that provides adequate capacity for transfer students; appropriate levels of general fund support and tuition that are commensurate with the

mission of the campus; and identification of any start-up costs. A progress report is due to the higher education and fiscal committees of the Legislature by December 15, 2004.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Rather than creating a new university (Cascadia State University) through the merger of the UW Bothell and Cascadia, the UW Bothell is established as a four-year campus. Provisions associated with creating a new university are eliminated, such as establishing a board of trustees based on the current Cascadia board, transferring assets and staff from the two institutions into the new university, and creating references in existing laws to Cascadia State University. Rather than having the HECB convene a transition task force for the creation of a new university, the UW will convene a work group to address implementation issues associated with the new designation of the UW Bothell.

A feasibility study by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy regarding the creation of additional baccalaureate and graduate opportunities in Southwest Washington is removed, as is an appropriation for the study.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 5, 2004.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Sections 2 and 3 take effect July 1, 2005, and the remainder of the bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Testimony For: (In support of original bill) The time has come for the Legislature to make some important decisions regarding the future of higher education. Washington needs more capacity, particularly for baccalaureate degrees. We have a strong two-plus-two system and it will continue. But, we need to give students more opportunity and access to four-year institutions. Many students would prefer to be in one unit, and the challenges of transfer from community colleges may never be remedied. The UW Bothell is already operating side by side with a community college on one campus, yet there are two separate administrative structures.

(With concerns to original bill) This proposal represents a very important strategic decision. If the Legislature chooses to create a four-year campus, it will have the ripple effect of putting other branch campuses on the path to become four-year campuses. That may be intentional and it certainly follows the pattern of other states. But this approach to expanding capacity is not practical; there are too many issues with different missions, accreditation, faculty hired distinctly to be at a research university versus a community college, and others.

Testimony Against: (Opposed to original bill) There has already been collateral damage at the UW Bothell and Cascadia. Students wonder whether they will get a degree; promising students have decided to go elsewhere; faculty are worried about tenure. Faculty of the UW Bothell are afforded full privileges, professional association, and academic services as faculty of the UW. Students attend the UW Bothell because it is part of the UW. This matters for jobs or graduate school. It would be a fatal mistake to sever that connection. The UW Bothell faculty work closely with Cascadia, but have developed very different cultures. Trying to merge an open enrollment policy with a selective admissions policy would be very problematic; the result is very different student populations. The UW Bothell has built a bond with local communities and businesses, and there is concern such a bond would be broken. This is particularly a concern if the intent is to reduce the level of funding. The City of Bothell expresses strong support for the collocated model.

There is clearly a need to increase capacity, but a proposal that closes a community college that is already nationally recognized in its short life span and ends a successful collocation should be examined more closely. This needs more rigorous and data-driven analysis to identify the problem to be solved and the solutions to be considered. Closing a community college is a disservice to students who lack skills to compete in a changing economy. Cascadia is in a unique position to serve non-traditional students and those who are economically challenged and cannot afford to pay for a four-year university. Many students prefer the two-plus-two model. Not everyone experiences problems with transfer. The UW Bothell provides a better fit and a more intimate learning atmosphere than a four-year university, plus it provides access to a third campus at the UW Seattle.

Persons Testifying: (In support of original bill) Representative Sommers, prime sponsor.

(With concerns to original bill) Lee Huntsman, University of Washington.

(Opposed to original bill) Representative Edwards; Warren Buck, University of Washington Bothell; Sandeep Krishnamurthy, Jacqueline Meszaros, and Daniel Jacoby, University of Washington Bothell faculty; Craig Murphy and Cynthia Corsine, University of Washington Bothell students; Danny Molvik, Associated Students of the University of Washington; Earl Hale, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Victoria Richart, Cascadia Community College; Dianne Campbell, Cascadia Community College Board of Trustees; John Bridge, Joselito Lopez, and Jessica Hyde, Cascadia Community College students; Michael Weight, City of Bothell; Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Federation of Teachers; and Gail Stygall, Council of Faculty Representatives.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Opposed to original bill) Linda Bale, Heather Miller, Jessica A. Matts, Toby Barnett, and Steven Gilbert, University of Washington Bothell; Travis Fairchild, University of Washington Bothell alumni; and Kenan Stipek, Terry Parker, Nicole Moore, and Jennifer Jones, Cascadia Community

College.

(With concerns to original bill) Larry Ganders, Washington State University; and Bruce Botka, Higher Education Coordinating Board.