

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 1096

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, March 22, 2007
Ways & Means, March 30, 2007

Title: An act relating to creating postsecondary opportunity programs.

Brief Description: Creating postsecondary opportunity programs.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Kenney, Priest, Quall, Wallace, Conway, Haler, Morris, Ormsby, Linville, Jarrett, Dickerson, Hunt, Walsh, P. Sullivan, Darneille, Appleton, Morrell, Williams, Dunn, Schual-Berke, Fromhold, Hasegawa, Chase, Upthegrove, McCoy, Green, O'Brien, Hudgins, Sells, Springer, Moeller, Goodman, Barlow, Eddy, Santos, Simpson, Haigh, Lantz, Kagi and Rolfes).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/08/07, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/19/07, 3/22/07 [DPA-WM].

Ways & Means: 3/30/07 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Shin, Chair; Kilmer, Vice Chair; Delvin, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Schoesler and Sheldon.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell, Hatfield, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Tom.

Staff: Tim Yowell (786-7435)

Background: Regular surveys of employers conducted by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) show that employers in the state consistently report difficulty finding workers for jobs with mid-level skills that require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree. The WTECB projects job openings for new workers with mid-level skills in Washington at 31,000 annually between 2009 and 2012. The

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

WTECB estimates that to meet this demand, an additional 1,170 full-time equivalent (FTE) workforce education students are needed annually, in addition to increases tied to population growth. The 2006 Operating Budget provided \$4 million for the community and technical college system to develop and implement the Opportunity Grants Pilot Program, which was designed to test strategies for increasing access to postsecondary education for low-income students in job-specific programs. As of December 2006, 436 students were participating in ten colleges selected from across the state to participate in the pilot.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill: The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) develops and implements the Opportunity Grant Program. Students in the program are eligible to receive funding for tuition and fees at the public community and technical college rate, plus \$1,000 per academic year for books, tools, and supplies. The SBCTC and the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) work together to ensure that students participating in the program receive all other state and federal financial aid to which they are entitled. Funding is limited to 45 credits or the equivalent of three years, whichever comes first. A student must make satisfactory progress and maintain a cumulative 2.0 grade point average for continued eligibility.

The program is available to Washington residents enrolled in "opportunity grant-eligible programs of study" at community and technical colleges, private career schools, and Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council-approved apprenticeship programs. It is phased in as follows: (1) students who enroll prior to January 2010 must have a family income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level; (2) students who enroll between January 2010 and January 2012 must have a family income that is at or below the state median family income; and (3) after January 2012, all students in eligible programs will qualify.

Colleges receive an enhancement of \$1,500 per FTE student enrolled in the program whose income is below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. These funds must be used for individualized support services necessary for student success. The SBCTC will, in partnership with business, labor, and the WTECB: (1) identify high demand training programs offered by qualified postsecondary institutions that lead to a credential, certificate, or degree; (2) gain recognition of the credentials, certificates, and degrees by Washington's employers and labor organizations, and designate them as "opportunity grant-eligible programs of study;" and (3) market the credentials, certificates, and degrees.

Community and technical colleges and local workforce development councils partner to develop the Opportunity Partnership Program which provides mentoring to opportunity grant students. Participating students are matched with a business or labor mentor employed in their field of study. The mentors help the student explore careers and employment options. The WTECB receives funding on behalf of the opportunity partnerships and distributes funds for the program.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT(S) AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Higher Education): The \$1,500 enhancement to institutions for use in providing support services to grant recipients is limited to public institutions. Private career schools do not receive the enhancement.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED STRIKING AMENDMENT(S) AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Ways & Means): Only students who have financial need, and

incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, are eligible for scholarships. Scholarship recipients do not have priority over other students for future state financial aid. The SBCTC is to establish selection criteria for use if funds are not sufficient to award scholarships to all eligible applicants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Higher Education): PRO: These are hard working students trying to support their families. The program builds on the very successful pilot project conducted at ten schools. It matches Washington jobs with Washington students. It helps the state provide opportunities for a more diverse workforce. It will serve as a pathway for some students who want to go on the four-year degrees. The program serves those young adults who would not otherwise have an opportunity for post-secondary education.

Persons Testifying (Higher Education): PRO: Representative Kenney, prime sponsor; Ann Daley, HECEB; Terry Byington, American Electronics Association; Michael Itti, League of Education Voters; Steve Lindstrom, NW Career Colleges Federation; Greg Scheiderer, Independent Colleges of Washington; Chris Reykdal, SBCTC; Bryan Wilson, WTECEB; Tony Lee, Solid Ground; Amber Carter, Association of Washington Business; Troy Hutson, Washington State Hospital Association.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means: on companion SB 5410): PRO: This bill would help employers find skilled workers for high-demand jobs by giving students the financial help they need to prepare for those jobs. It's about addressing unmet needs, so that students don't have to choose between paying for daycare or going to school.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Chris Reykdal, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Lee Lambert, President of Shoreline Community College.