

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5475

May 16, 1991

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 5 and 6, Senate Bill No. 5475 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to higher education."

Section 5 of Senate Bill No. 5475 states the intent of the Legislature that sick leave policies be uniform and consistent for all faculty and administrators hired after May 1, 1992 at the state's community colleges, regional universities, state colleges and research universities. Section 6 requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with the State Board for Community College Education, to study institutional sick leave policies and recommend mandated uniform and consistent policy for all faculty and administrators hired after May 1, 1992.

The rationale for passing this legislation is not clear. The Legislative Budget Committee reviewed higher education sick leave policies in 1989 and concluded that, prior to modifying the sick leave policies, better data should be collected to permit informed decision-making. In 1990, a law was passed requiring the institutions of higher education to maintain complete and accurate sick leave records. One year of data collection is insufficient to conclude that uniform and consistent sick leave policies are appropriate for the institutions of higher education. As the Legislative Budget Committee correctly observed in their report, sick leave benefits should be considered in the broader context of an overall compensation package, and compensation should be related to the complexity and amount of work assignments.

This legislation disregards the advice of the Legislative Budget Committee and inappropriately prescribes the outcome of the Higher Education Coordinating Board study required in Section 6.

For the reasons stated above, I have vetoed sections 5 and 6 of Senate Bill No. 5475.

With the exception of sections 5 and 6, Senate Bill No. 5475 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Booth Gardner  
Governor