

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1619

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to international education and cultural exchanges.

Brief Description: Creating the Washington Task Force on International Education and Cultural Exchanges.

Sponsors: Representatives Shin, Jacobsen, Campbell, Finkbeiner, Sheldon, J. Kohl, Wood, Schoesler, Veloria, Dorn, G. Cole, Forner, Wineberry, Heavey, Edmondson, Cothorn, Long, Horn, Pruitt, Quall, Basich and King.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, February 19, 1993, DPS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Jacobsen, Chair; Quall, Vice Chair; Brumsickle, Ranking Minority Member; Sheahan, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Bray; Carlson; Casada; Finkbeiner; Flemming; Kessler; J. Kohl; Mielke; Ogden; Orr; Rayburn; Shin; and Wood.

Staff: Susan Hosch (786-7120).

Background: Washington's economy is increasingly dependent on international trade. In 1990, a study by the International Education Subcommittee of the House Higher Education Committee found that three out of every five university graduates in this state will work directly in a field that involves international trade. It also found that there is an increasing perception among educators that international activities and programs are essential to the academic mission and to the future.

Through a survey, the subcommittee discovered that the efforts of colleges and universities to increase the global awareness of students and faculty varies greatly among institutions. The public four-year colleges and universities were far more extensive in the level and variety of intercultural programs and courses offered than

were the community colleges. For example, the number of formal study abroad programs available to students in the four-year institutions ranged from 12 at Central Washington University to 85 at the University of Washington. All six institutions had reciprocal placements for foreign students within their study abroad programs. In contrast, community colleges varied from no study abroad programs available to students to five programs available to students at Highline and Spokane Falls community colleges. Opportunities for faculty exchanges were also greater at the four-year institutions than at community colleges.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

TASK FORCE ESTABLISHED

The Washington Task Force on International Education and Cultural Exchanges is established. The members may include persons from a broad array of government, education, cultural, and business interests. These include: the Legislature, local government, agriculture, education, higher education, business, labor, state agencies, and cultural exchange organizations. With the assistance and support of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Trade and Economic Development, other state agencies, and institutions of higher education, the Higher Education Coordinating Board will administer the task force. The board will select members of the task force. In making its selections, the board will select members from diverse cultural backgrounds and will strive to promote geographic balance. The board may accept grants and gifts to facilitate the work of the task force.

PURPOSES

The 12 purposes of the task force are described. These include recommending policies, programs, and activities that will help to ensure that students at all educational levels have an education that includes an understanding of the languages, culture, traditions, history and government of peoples of and from other lands. The task force will recommend ways to promote and coordinate cultural exchanges, complete and disseminate a survey of higher education on international education issues, and gather information about sister and other relationships between local governments and governments in other lands. In addition, the task force will recommend ways to enrich the experience of international students in Washington's schools and colleges, and will recommend the feasibility of requiring coursework in some aspect of international and multicultural education as a condition of teacher certification and high school and college graduation. The task force will also recommend

collaborative structures to facilitate the development of international education and cultural exchanges, and will identify funding methods to ensure a sustained investment in international education.

REPORTS

The task force will provide a preliminary report to the governor and the Legislature by December 30, 1993. A second report containing the task force's findings and recommendations is due by October 1, 1994.

EXPIRATION DATE

The law expires on June 30, 1995.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Community and technical college administrators may participate as members of the task force. The task force will consider ways to promote multicultural as well as international education. The task force will consider the feasibility of requiring coursework in the language and the culture, history, or government of another country or region as a condition of high school or college graduation. The task force will recommend collaborative structures and programs to facilitate international education and cultural exchanges. In addition, the task force will identify funding methods to ensure a sustained investment in international education.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 18, 1993.

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

Testimony For: About 20 percent of Washington's jobs are tied to international trade. Therefore, the state's common school and its institutions of higher education have an obligation to prepare students to live and work in an international and multicultural world. Washington needs to create a curriculum for future state, national and world leaders. The state also needs a strategic plan to identify and coordinate the skills and policies necessary for the state's citizens to be competitive in the global business environment they face in the 21st century. The task force envisioned in this bill can begin to identify the types of policies and actions that would form the foundation of a strategic plan. The diverse representation on the task force and the emphasis on collaboration and partnerships in the mission of the group will help to ensure that those policies and actions are comprehensive and effective. The inclusion of the role of international students in the mission of the task force will focus much needed attention

on the contributions these ambassadors without portfolio make in the academic, cultural, and economic life of the state.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: (in favor) Russell Lidman, The Evergreen State College; Judy McNickle, The Higher Education Coordinating Board; Brian Bosse, Seattle Pacific University; Louise Whitaker, South Puget Sound Community College; and Sam Shepherd, American Cultural Exchange.