

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1674

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to disclosures by institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Requiring institutions of higher education, private vocational schools, and diploma and degree-granting institutions to disclose financial instability and changes in accreditation status.

Sponsors: Representatives Flemming, Carlson, Jacobsen, Veloria, Eide, J. Kohl, Kessler, Campbell, Dorn, Cothorn, Quall, Roland, L. Johnson, Lemmon and Ogden.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, February 1, 1994, DPS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Jacobsen, Chair; Quall, Vice Chair; Brumsickle, Ranking Minority Member; Sheahan, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Bray; Carlson; Casada; Finkbeiner; Flemming; Kessler; Mastin; Mielke; Ogden; Rayburn; Shin and Wood.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: Current statutes do not require institutions of higher education, private vocational schools, degree granting institutions or schools licensed to operate in Washington to notify students of change in accreditation, degree granting status or licensing status. Recently, Griffin College lost its accreditation, but students were not warned of the change in accreditation status.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Each institution of higher education, private vocational school, degree granting institution and schools licensed to operate in Washington must notify students if the institution is in danger of losing institutional or program accreditation.

The institutions must notify the students within 10 working days of receiving notification that the institution has failed to take corrective action or meet probationary standards.

The institutions must provide written notice to affected full and part-time students, inquiring and potential students, and prior to enrolling new students. The written notice to full and part-time students must state the cause for and nature of the change, effect of such change on the student's educational program, and options available to students. Each licensing or authorizing agency must adopt rules to implement the notice requirements.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Specific notice requirements to full and part-time students are outlined. Notice must include options available to students.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 27, 1994.

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

Testimony For: This draft is an improvement over similar legislation introduced last year. We like the concept, but we want to be able to assist students with the tuition recovery fund. Notice should not cause students to withdraw but should notify students of their options.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Jerry Sheehan, Associated Civil Liberties Union; Marlene Coplen, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (some concerns); and Linda Broderick, Washington Federation of Private Vocational Schools (pro).