

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1708

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to the commission on student learning.

Brief Description: Increasing the membership of the commission on student learning.

Sponsors: Representatives Peery, Ballard, Dorn, Brough, Jones, Pruitt, Cothorn, Basich, Hansen, Roland, Fuhrman, Jacobsen, Ogden, Karahalios, J. Kohl, H. Myers and Johanson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, February 11, 1993, DPA;
Passed House, March 1, 1993, 89-0;
Amended by Senate;
Conference Committee Report Adopted;
Passed Legislature, April 25, 1993, 98-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Dorn, Chair; Cothorn, Vice Chair; G. Cole; Eide; G. Fisher; Hansen; Holm; Jones; Karahalios; J. Kohl; Patterson; Pruitt; and Roland.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Brough, Ranking Minority Member; Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; Stevens; and Vance.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: The 1992 Legislature approved legislation that established a process for developing and implementing new student assessment and school accountability systems for public K-12 schools. The act also began the process of reducing state-level control of how instruction is provided in local school districts.

The legislation created a Commission on Student Learning, which was given the responsibility for developing the new assessment and accountability system. The commission also was given the responsibility to take other actions to move the education system toward a "performance-based" system.

The commission is composed of nine members: three appointed by the State Board of Education; three appointed by Governor Gardner; and three appointed by Governor Lowry.

The Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding has recommended that the size of the commission be increased by two members, and that the governor appoint the commission chair.

Summary of Bill: The size of the Commission on Student Learning is increased by two members by having the governor appoint five members, instead of only three. The governor also is given the responsibility for appointing the commission's chair.

It is specified that the governor shall fill any vacancies of gubernatorial appointments, and the State Board of Education shall fill any vacancies of State Board appointments.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The size of the commission needs to be expanded to ensure that the major stakeholders are represented. Also, by passing the legislation at this time, it will make it possible for the commission to proceed with its work for efficiently.

Testimony Against: The commission should be able to select its own chair. The delegation of this decision would likely increase the effectiveness of the commission.

Witnesses: Susan Patrick, Superintendent of Public Instruction (Pro for increasing size); Cynthia Flynn, Council of Presidents (Pro); and Kathleen Anderson, State Board of Education (Pro for increasing size, against having governor appoint chair).