

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5781

As Passed House - Amended
April 17, 1993

Title: An act relating to higher education.

Brief Description: Improving access to public institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Jesernig, Bauer, Moyer, Pelz, Bluechel, Spanel, Hargrove, Drew, von Reichbauer, Snyder, Sheldon, Loveland, McDonald, Erwin, M. Rasmussen, Barr, Prentice, Sutherland, McAuliffe, West, Oke, Amondson, Haugen, Franklin, Sellar, Hochstatter, Fraser, Deccio, A. Smith and Winsley).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, March 31, 1993, DPA;
Appropriations, April 3, 1993, DPA(HE/APP);
Passed House - Amended, April 17, 1993, 96-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. 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; J. Kohl; Ogden; Orr; Rayburn; Shin; and Wood.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended by Committee on Higher Education as such amendment is amended by Committee on Appropriations. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Locke, Chair; Valle, Vice Chair; Silver, Ranking Minority Member; Carlson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Ballasiotes; Basich; Cooke; Dellwo; Dorn; Dunshee; G. Fisher; Jacobsen; Lemmon; Linville; Peery; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Sommers; Stevens; Talcott; Wang; Wineberry; and Wolfe.

Staff: Sherie Story (786-7142).

Background: There are two recurring themes in discussions of access to higher education in Washington State: (1) enrollment limits; and (2) the declining proportion of the state budget dedicated to higher education.

During the past 10 years, the state's participation rate in higher education programs has declined. In 1981, the state was seventh in the nation in higher education participation; by 1990, this ranking had fallen to 29th, below the national average.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) has adopted the goal of reaching the 90th percentile in national participation rates by the year 2010.

Summary of Bill: It is the policy of the state of Washington that the essential requirements level budget for higher education include enrollment levels necessary to maintain the participation rate funded in the 1993 fiscal year.

It is the policy of the state that during deliberations, the governor and the Legislature consider increasing enrollments to achieve enrollment goals adopted by the Higher Education Coordinating Board in its enrollment plan. The governor's budget proposal to the Legislature must include information on the number of students necessary to achieve the goal and the cost of funding such incremental increases.

The participation rate used to calculate enrollment levels will be based on: (1) fall enrollment as reported in the higher education enrollment report of the Office of Financial Management (OFM); (2) the fall enrollment as reported in the management information system of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; and (3) the fall population forecast of OFM.

Estimates of future participation rates and enrollment levels shall be based on procedures and standards established by a technical working group. Members of the group shall represent: the Higher Education Coordination Board; the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; fiscal and higher education committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate; and the Office of Financial Management. Formal estimates of future participation rates and enrollment levels will be determined by OFM. OFM will submit the formal estimates to the fiscal committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will periodically review

enrollment goals and report to the governor and higher education committees.

It is the policy of the state that financial need not be a barrier to participation in higher education. The Higher Education Coordinating Board is directed to restructure the state's financial aid program's into a comprehensive program. The program is called College Promise. The board must restructure the state's financial aid program by following the goals set out in the legislation. The goals include: (1) expanding eligibility for state financial aid programs; (2) limiting the debt of an undergraduate student to no more than one-half of a student's cost of attendance; (3) providing more self-help opportunities; (4) sheltering home equity when determining eligibility for state financial aid; (5) simplifying the financial aid process; (6) providing clear and timely information to students about the costs of attendance; (7) classifying needy students by family income levels, based on the state's median income for a family of four; and (8) determining the feasibility of providing grants to students whose parents did not complete a higher education degree or certificate. Additionally, the board is directed to expand the state need grant program to include new populations of resident students.

The provisions in current law that limit community college district enrollment to plus or minus 2 percent of the amount authorized in the operating budget appropriations act are repealed.

Fiscal Note: Requested April 1, 1993.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect July 1, 1993.

Testimony For: (Higher Education) Access to higher education is the only method to increase real wages. Until higher education is fully funded we will continue to increase taxes. Essential Requirements Levels are not calculated the same for all agencies. K-12, social services, and corrections actually have growth in the current budget. An investment must be made in higher education to maintain current levels of service. This bill establishes good policy. In order to maintain access, enrollment levels must be increased. The bill reflects the recommendations in the Higher Education Coordinating Board master plan.

(Appropriations) Essential Requirements Levels are not calculated the same for all agencies. K-12, social services, and corrections actually have growth in the current budget. An investment must be made in higher education to maintain current levels of service. This bill establishes good

policy. In order to maintain access, enrollment levels must be increased.

Testimony Against: (Higher Education) None.

(Appropriations) None.

Witnesses: (Higher Education) (In favor) Terry Teale, Council of Presidents; Sherry Burkey, University of Washington; Gretchen Wippel, Washington Student Lobby; Jan Yoshiwara, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Larry Ganders, Washington State University; Jim Sainsbury, Higher Education Coordinating Board; and Joe Johnson, Clark College.

(Appropriations) Senator Jim Jesernig, prime sponsor (supports); Terry Teale, Council of Presidents (supports); and David Habura, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (supports).