

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1514

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to the Olympic natural resources center.

Brief Description: Requiring the board of directors of the Olympic natural resources center to administer the Olympic natural resources center.

Sponsors: Representatives Kessler, Jacobsen, Basich, Jones, Holm, Sheldon and Riley.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, February 26, 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: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: Current statute provides that the Olympic Natural Resources Center will be operated under the authority of the board of regents of the University of Washington. The program is administered by a director.

An advisory committee appointed by the governor provides guidance to the director. Membership on the policy advisory board includes state and federal government, environmental organizations, the local community, the timber industry, and Indian tribes.

The purpose of the center is to conduct research and provide education on natural resources management approaches that integrate the maintenance of ecological values with the economic benefits of forestry.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Olympic Natural Resources Center will be operated by a board of directors. The board members will be appointed by the governor and serve three year terms. The members of the board will represent state and federal government, environmental organizations, the local community, the timber industry, Indian tribes, marine-related interests, and the provost of the University of Washington. The center is given authority to conduct research and education throughout the region and state.

The University of Washington will provide the staff, faculty and facilities to support the operation of the center.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The members of the board of directors will represent the interest groups that are currently represented on the advisory board. Additionally, marine-related interests and the provost of the University of Washington will serve on the board. The center is given authority to conduct research and education throughout the region and state.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: (Original bill): Marine-related interests are not receiving enough attention under the current governance structure. Local interests are also not adequately represented.

Testimony Against: (Original bill): The center is in a transitional stage. There has been a struggle in getting the marine and terrestrial aspects of the center to work together, however, the center is involved in marine-related activities. The center is developing the marine component. This will include a list of education and research priorities. The current governance structure allows the center to utilize all the resources of the university. The best approach is to allow the center to report to the Legislature before the end of session on a priority list for the marine component and proposals to modify the governance structure.

Witnesses: (In favor): Jennifer Belcher, Commissioner of Public Lands. (Opposed): Marsha Landolt, University of Washington School of Fisheries; and David Thorud, University of Washington College of Forest Resources.