

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6371

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Higher Education

**Title:** An act relating to degree-granting authority.

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions relating to higher education degree-granting authority.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Bauer, Prince, Sheldon, Winsley and Drew).

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Higher Education, February 18, 1994, DP.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Jacobsen, Chair; Quall, Vice Chair; Brumsickle, Ranking Minority Member; Sheahan, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Bray; Carlson; Casada; Finkbeiner; Flemming; Mastin; Ogden; Rayburn; Shin and Wood.

**Staff:** Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

**Background:** Currently, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) regulates non-degree granting private vocational schools. The private vocational school act allows the WTECB to assist students in evaluating private vocational school programs and in obtaining refunds in the event of the student's withdrawal, school cancellation or school closure.

In 1987 legislation was implemented creating a tuition recovery trust fund for the benefit and protection of private vocational school students. The funds are used to settle claims or pay restitution if a school is found to have engaged in an unfair business practice. The contribution of each school is determined on a pro-rata basis. The WTECB determines the liability of each private vocational school on an incremental scale.

Currently, the tuition recovery trust fund only benefits the non-degree seeking students enrolled in private vocational schools.

**Summary of Bill:** The language is clarified that provides for a interagency agreement between the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HEC Board) and the WTECB to regulate degree and non-degree programs.

A separate account is created in the tuition recovery trust fund. Claims made by students enrolled in degree granting vocational programs shall be made against the assets in the HEC Board's account.

The HEC Board is responsible for maintaining and administering the account. The HEC Board's operation of the account parallels the WTECB's current operation of the tuition recovery fund. For example, the HEC Board will determine the amount of liability that can be satisfied by the account and will adopt by rule a matrix for calculating the deposits into the account required of each degree-granting private vocational school.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** The Higher Education Coordinating Board would like the committee to reaffirm their support for this issue. The companion bill already passed the house. The bill provides for greater efficiency and consumer protection.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Jane Sherman, Higher Education Coordinating Board (pro).