

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5836

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS, MARCH 4, 1993

Brief Description: Redefining the relationship between the state and its postsecondary institutions.

SPONSORS: Senators Bauer, Prince, West, Drew, Jesernig, Sheldon, Snyder and Gaspard

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5836 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Bauer, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Cantu, Jesernig, Prince, Quigley, Sheldon, von Reichbauer, and West.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Hearing Dates: February 24, 1993; February 26, 1993

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5836 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chairman; Spanel, Vice Chairman; Bauer, Cantu, Gaspard, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Jesernig, McDonald, Moyer, Roach, Snyder, Sutherland, Talmadge, West, and Williams.

Staff: Linda Brownell (786-7715)

Hearings Dates: March 4, 1993

BACKGROUND:

As the result of one of the recommendations of the Temporary Committee on Educational Policies, Structure and Management, the Legislature in 1985 created the Higher Education Coordinating Board. Legislative intent requires the board to represent the broad public interest above the interests of the individual colleges and universities. The board was given specific planning duties, program responsibilities, and administrative responsibilities, as well as the responsibility to adopt a master plan for higher education by December 1, 1987, and to update the plan biennially and present it to the Governor and the appropriate legislative committees.

SUMMARY:

The relationship between the state and its public colleges and universities is redefined and a new alignment of responsibilities is established.

The colleges and universities are responsible for developing strategic plans, providing timely information, administering local student financial aid programs, and operating as efficiently as feasible.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board is responsible for coordinating the strategic plans, preparing regular reports to the citizens of the state, administering statewide financial aid programs, and helping institutions improve efficiency.

The state provides incentives to improve postsecondary education by supporting the Fund for Excellence with an amount equal to one-half of 1 percent of proposed appropriations for the state's public colleges and universities. The state allows institutions to keep savings accrued from management efficiencies and productivity improvements. The state grants authority to the Higher Education Coordinating Board to waive statutory regulations or administrative rules for two-year pilot programs which indicate potential efficiencies.

In addition, the state requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board to conduct a study of higher education system operations to identify efficiencies to increase access to, improve the quality of, and reduce the cost of higher education.

The revision of the master plan is required every four years.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

It is clarified that the responsibility for planning and efficiencies for the community and technical colleges rest with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. The SBCTC will respond directly to the Higher Education Coordinating Board rather than have 32 individual responses.

The funding for the fund for excellence is removed.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE:

Language is removed which allowed the institutions to divert general fund state appropriations into an institutional account and guaranteed that these funds be available and not offset in the next biennium. The Higher Education Coordinating Board's ability to waive any Washington State statute is changed to reviewing statutory rules and regulations, reviewing different proposals and reporting its findings to the Legislature. The last change removes an incorrect reference to vocational technical institutes under the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

A four-year cycle for updating the master plan will be acceptable policy. Though all testimony supported the bill, reservations were voiced about dollars to the fund for excellence. Concerns about strategic planning were expressed. Also, questions were raised concerning the need to give any more statutory authority to the HECEB.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Terry Teale, Executive Director, Council of Presidents; Dave Habura, Deputy Executive Director, SBCTC; Steve Lindstrom, WSL; Al Froderberg, WWU; George Drurie, EWU; Laurel Wilkening, Provost, UW; Steven Seward, Chair, Higher Education Coordinating Board