

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1345

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to the doctoral fellowship for faculty diversity program.

Brief Description: Establishing the doctoral fellowship for faculty diversity program.

Sponsors: Representatives Mason, Mulliken, Jacobsen, Chopp, Regala and Conway; by request of Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/2/95, 2/16/95 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Mulliken, Vice Chairman; Jacobsen, Ranking Minority Member; Mason, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Delvin; Mastin and Sheahan.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Benton and Goldsmith.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: According to 1993 figures provided by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB), while approximately 15 percent of the State's population are people of color and 17.1 percent of students enrolled in public four-year institutions and community colleges are students of color, 9.8 percent of faculty are people of color. The comparative disproportion of faculty of color is an issue of concern for the HECB and regional education organizations such as the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

In 1987, the Legislature enacted the Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship Program, a state scholarship program administered by the HECB. The program is designed to recruit as future teachers those students who have distinguished themselves through outstanding academic achievement and students who can act as role models for children including those of targeted ethnic minorities. This program

is expected to terminate by June 30, 1995. However, state programs to increase the number of under-represented minorities within doctoral programs do not exist within Washington State.

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), along with two other regional interstate higher education compacts (the New England Board of Higher Education and the Southern Regional Education Board) have established the Compact for Faculty Diversity, a five year effort to prepare new minority faculty and to improve graduate education at the departmental level.

To date, New Mexico is participating in the Compact's efforts and has passed legislation to create the "Minority Doctoral Assistance Student Loan-For-Service Program" which requires program recipients to teach in exchange for loan forgiveness.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The HECB has recommended that Washington State participate with WICHE's efforts and enact the Doctoral Fellowship for Faculty Diversity Program. The program has several goals: 1) to increase the number of ethnic minorities available to teach at the college and university level in academic disciplines in which ethnic minorities are demonstrably under-represented in Washington colleges and universities; 2) to create a partnership between the state, institutions of higher education and students that will lead to greater participation of ethnic minorities in the ranks of college and university faculties, enhancing educational opportunities and quality for all Washington citizens; and 3) to supplement funding from foundations and institutions for minority doctoral students.

The doctoral scholarship for faculty diversity program is created. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will administer the program. The board's program powers and duties are described. With the assistance of a screening committee comprised of faculty, administrators, and individuals involved in assisting ethnic minority students to obtain a higher education. The board will also adopt rules and guidelines; publicize the program; award scholarships, and coordinate activities with the sponsoring institution.

Selection criteria shall emphasize the student's academic potential as a faculty member, interest in serving as a faculty member in Washington and leadership ability. Priority will be given to students willing to teach in an academic discipline in which the individual's ethnic group is demonstrably under-represented. In addition, a scholarship recipient must be needy, a resident, enrolled in a doctoral program and maintaining satisfactory academic progress. The recipient must have a declared intention to teach at a Washington institution of higher education upon program completion.

The board may award scholarships from appropriated funds. A student is eligible for a scholarship of 50 percent of the student's unmet need. A scholarship may not exceed \$10,000 per academic year.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill clarifies eligibility requirements, Higher Education Coordinating Board responsibilities, and the definition of sponsoring institution. Language requiring a student to have a B.A. in an academic discipline in which ethnic minorities are demonstrably under-represented is deleted.

Appropriation: Unspecified.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This is a national partnership effort to increase the number of ethnic minority faculty. The bill is not only about students of color - it helps everyone. Washington should contribute to the effort to increase the numbers of minority faculty. We will work to keep the candidates we educate in Washington State.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Dawn Mason, prime sponsor; and Cedric Page, Higher Education Coordinating Board (in favor).