

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2481

As Passed House:

February 10, 1998

Title: An act relating to requiring authorization for certain higher education personnel arrangements.

Brief Description: Requiring approval of certain higher education personnel arrangements that exceed fifty thousand dollars in value.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Higher Educ (originally sponsored by Representatives Schoesler, Sump, Sheahan, Honeyford, Mulliken and McCune).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/27/98, 1/30/98 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/10/98, 96-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Radcliff, Vice Chairman; Mason, Ranking Minority Member; Kenney, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Butler; Dunn; O'Brien; Sheahan and Van Luven.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: Governing boards have full control of their institution, including the authority to employ the president, his assistant, members of the faculty and employees of the institution. Additionally, the board determines conditions of employment and termination. In carrying out those duties, the board may enter into contracts that are appropriate for their institutions.

Summary of Bill: The Office of Financial Management must approve higher education administrators' professional leave agreements, severance packages, and contract settlements that exceed 50 percent of the administrators' base salary.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Settlements at Eastern Washington University were approved by the board of trustees, but on the face the agreements appears to be excessive. This legislation places a reasonable limit on such agreements and a safety belt. There may be an issue with faculty sabbaticals, and we may want to amend the bill to focus on administrators.

Testimony Against: (Original bill) The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) is not a governing board, we are a coordinating board. The HECB could not deal with these issues in a timely manner, this is a job for the regents. The HECB would be uncomfortable with this responsibility. Personnel matters are issues for the governing boards.

Testified: Representative Mark Schoesler, prime sponsor; Susan Patrick, Higher Education Coordinating Board; Bev Hermanson, WFSE; and Terry Teale, Council of Presidents.