

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5517

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to the membership of the governing boards of the state's institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Requiring one student member on each state institution of higher education's governing board.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Wood, Kohl, Bauer, Patterson, Winsley, Brown, Goings, Fraser, Loveland, Benton, Sellar, Franklin and Oke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/26/98 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Radcliff, Vice Chairman; Kenney, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Butler; Dunn; O'Brien and Sheahan.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Van Loven.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: The public research institutions, the University of Washington (UW) and Washington State University (WSU), are each governed by a board of regents. Each board has nine members appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate to serve six-year terms.

The Evergreen State College (TESC) and the regional universities, Central Washington University (CWU), Eastern Washington University (EWU), and Western Washington University (WWU), are each governed by a seven-member board of trustees appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate to serve a term of six years.

The research universities allow one graduate student, one undergraduate student and one representative of the faculty senate to serve as advisory members to the boards. The advisory members are presidents of their respective associations. Advisory members do not vote, but do have a formal place on the agenda at each meeting.

The regional universities have the chair of the faculty senate and the student body president sit as advisory members to the board. CWU includes the chair of the association of administrators. EWU's board receives from the advisory members a written and an oral report at each meeting. Advisory members do not vote.

Sitting at the table with the board of trustees at TESC are the past chair of the faculty agenda committee, one student volunteer, one alumni representative, and one staff representative elected by the staff. These advisory members do not vote but take part in the discussion.

Summary of Bill: For the University of Washington and for Washington State University, the Governor, with the consent of the Senate, appoints one full-time student in good standing to the board of regents. The student is chosen from a list of at least three and not more than five names submitted to the Governor by the student governing body. The term of the student regent is for one year from June 1 until the appointment and qualification of the successor. Each board of regents is 10 members, with six members constituting a quorum.

For CWU, WWU, and EWU, the Governor, with the consent of the Senate, appoints one full-time student in good standing to the board of trustees. The student is chosen from a list of at least three and not more than five names submitted to the Governor by the student governing body. The term of the student trustee is for one year from June 1 until the appointment and qualification of the successor. Each board of trustees is eight members, with five members constituting a quorum.

For TESC, the Governor, with the consent of the Senate, appoints one full-time student in good standing to the board of trustees. The student is chosen from a list of at least three and not more than five names submitted to the Governor by the student body. The term of the student trustee is for one year from June 1 until the appointment and qualification of the successor. The board of trustees is eight members, with five members constituting a quorum.

Student board members must excuse themselves from participating or voting on issues related to hiring, discipline or tenure of faculty and personnel.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Students are not a special interest group, but rather the reason for the existence of the schools. Students at Evergreen would like to have a voting position on the board of trustees. There are two differences from the House bill: (1) the Governor will select the student member from a list of at least three, and not more than five names; and (2) the students at Evergreen will select the student candidates and not the service and activities board.

Testimony Against: Students will only represent the interests of students and not the institution of higher education. Students should not participate in executive sessions.

Testified: Nick Mitchell, student, The Evergreen State College (Pro); Radha Sosienski, student, The Evergreen State College (Pro); Adrienne Thompson, Washington Student Lobby, Western Washington University (Pro); Kim Merriman, The Evergreen State College (Con); and Martha Lindley, Central Washington University (Concerns).