

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6723

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 5, 1998

Title: An act relating to part-time employees of community and technical colleges.

Brief Description: Requiring prorated compensation and benefits for part-time community and technical college employees.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Wood, Kohl, Patterson, Thibaudeau, Brown, Fraser, Prentice, Goings, Snyder and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/3/98, 2/5/98 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6723 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wood, Chair; Bauer, Hale, Kohl, Patterson, B. Sheldon and West.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: In 1996, the Legislature established a Best Practices Task Force to look at compensation packages and conditions of employment for part-time faculty in the community and technical college system.

Findings: The Best Practices Task Force found that the process for hiring part-time faculty is informal, part-time faculty have conditional contracts based on their college's needs, many colleges do not have a performance evaluation for part-time faculty, the investment in professional development for part-time faculty is lower than for full-time faculty, support services and office space for part-time faculty is minimal, colleges use a variety of methods to communicate with part-time faculty, and only 15 colleges provide some form of sick leave for part-time faculty.

Recommendations: The boards of trustees for the community and technical colleges are encouraged to develop a written policy on the employment of part-time faculty, widely publicize notices of vacancies and develop a structured application process, provide timely written employment agreements for multiple quarters to part-time faculty, provide periodic evaluations for part-time faculty and use the evaluations in making employment decisions and determining professional development needs, provide professional development that is available to part-time and full-time faculty, identify part-time faculty needs for office space and equipment and meet those needs within available resources, use a variety of methods to communicate with part-time faculty and provide avenues for part-time faculty to communicate with college leadership, provide individual and group recognition for achievements of part-time faculty, develop a sick-leave policy for part-time faculty with a

continuing relationship with the college, and apply the definition of "academic freedom" to part-time and full-time faculty and provide the appropriate grievance process.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Part-time faculty receives prorated compensation for salary, retirement benefits, and health care benefits. Part-time faculty receive prorated salary based on the full-time salary schedule in the employee's college district. Part-time employees who work less than 50 percent are compensated on a pro rata basis for health care benefits. The health care benefits are based on the average premium paid by the state for full-time faculty. Part-time faculty are also eligible for retirement benefits on a pro rata basis.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 29, 1998.

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

Testimony For: Thank you for recognizing the parity problem that affects 10,000 part-time faculty. Thank you for attempting to close the gap. The passage of this bill will lead to more full-time faculty and the use of part-time faculty will occur only where pedagogically appropriate. There will be no more "free way flyer exhaustion."

You will now pay quality salaries to your faculty who have Masters degrees and PhDs. Benefits are important and will truly help those who are working less than half time. There will no longer be an incentive for the colleges to hire people for less than half time. This new policy will eliminate tension that now exists between the part-time faculty and the full-time faculty. All faculty desire to be active participants and successful practitioners in the academic world.

Currently, too many core classes are taught by part-timers. Please stop the "unethical exploitation" of part-timers. Please do not fill the positions of the retiring full-timers with part-timers. Cost should not be an impediment to passing this bill.

SBCTC has always supported this idea but may need to make a stronger case to the Legislature. Please be cautious with regard to the collective bargaining agreements at the various colleges.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Keith Hoeller, Green River CC; Doug Collins, South Seattle CC; Deborah Brink, Green River CC and Highline CC; Dana Rush, Green River CC; Evelyn Reider, WFT; Julia Zarete, North Seattle CC; Antonia Clark, North Seattle CC; Michael Kischner, North Seattle CC.