

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5166

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to branches of member institutions of accrediting associations recognized by rule of the higher education coordinating board.

Brief Description: Allowing state financial aid to be used at Washington branch campuses of accredited out-of-state institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Carlson, Horn, Shin, Jacobsen and McAuliffe).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 3/21/01, 3/28/01 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows state financial aid to be used at a qualified branch of an out-of-state institution.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Cox, Republican Co-Chair; Kenney, Democratic Co-Chair; Gombosky, Democratic Vice Chair; Jarrett, Republican Vice Chair; Fromhold, Lantz and Skinner.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Dunn.

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

Under current law, state student financial aid may be used at any public university, college, community college or vocational-technical institute operated by the state or any political subdivision. The aid can also be used at any other university, college, school or institute in Washington offering post-secondary instruction so long as the school is a member of an accrediting association recognized by the Higher Education Coordinating

Board (HECB). In order for an institution, branch, extension or facility affiliated with an institution from outside of Washington to be eligible to accept state financial aid, it must be separately accredited member of any accrediting association recognized by the HECB.

State Work Study may be used at any post-secondary institution in Washington accredited by the Northwest Association of School and Colleges as well as any public technical college in this state.

As the result of the current requirements, there are several branch campuses of out-of-state institutions ineligible for state financial aid.

Summary of Bill:

State financial aid may be used at a branch of an institution that is a member of an accrediting association recognized by the HECB, is eligible for federal financial aid, and has operated as a nonprofit college or university delivering on-site classroom instruction in Washington for a minimum of 10 consecutive years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: There are seven institutions that would be eligible under this bill: Antioch, Chapman, Embry-Riddle, Linfield, Park, Southern Illinois University and Columbia College. Ninety-eight percent of Antioch's students in Seattle are working Washington residents and the average age is 37. Many of these fit the definition of "financially needy student" and could benefit substantially from state financial aid. There was an attempt to handle this administratively; however, it could not be done and that is why this bill is needed. The Higher Education Coordinating Board reviewed this bill and endorses it because it will expand the range of student choices and opportunities. The high threshold will prevent the floodgates from opening--only branches well-established in Washington would qualify.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor; Dennis Eagle, Antioch University-Seattle; and Bruce Botka, Higher Education Coordinating Board.