

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5552

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to border county higher education opportunities.

Brief Description: Expanding border county higher education opportunities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Carlson, Kohl-Welles, Hale, B. Sheldon, Hewitt, Sheahan, Shin, Zarelli, Parlette and Horn).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/13/02, 2/22/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- The Border County Higher Education Project is made permanent and is expanded to include bordering Oregon counties and Washington institutions of higher education to participate in the program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Kenney, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Cox, Ranking Minority Member; Chase, Dunn and Jarrett.

Staff: Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

Background:

Reciprocity agreements between Oregon and Washington have been in effect for nearly two decades. The agreements specify numbers of students participating and dollar amounts waived by each state. Since the early 1990s, several colleges and universities in both states elected to discontinue participation due primarily to administration complexities.

In 1997, Oregon state statute allowed Washington residents to enroll in courses at any of its community colleges at resident tuition rates. Washington residents also could enroll at

Portland State University and Oregon Institute of Technology for eight credits or less at resident tuition rates.

In 1999, the Border County Higher Education Pilot Project was created responding to tuition policy changes made by the state of Oregon. Under the pilot project, residents of Oregon who have resided in Columbia, Multnomah, Clatsop or Washington counties for at least 90 days are eligible to pay resident tuition rates for any number of credits if they enroll in courses at Lower Columbia Community College, Grays Harbor Community College, and Clark Community College, or for eight or fewer credits at the Vancouver branch of Washington State University. In 2000, the pilot project was expanded to include residents of Clackamas County, Oregon.

The program is administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). Participating Washington institutions are required to give priority program enrollment to Washington residents. The HECB is required to analyze by program the impact of the pilot project on enrollment levels, distribution of students by residency, and enrollment capacity, and report to the Governor and Legislature on the results by November 30, 2001. The pilot project expires June 30, 2002.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The border reciprocity pilot project is made permanent and expanded to allow Washington institutions of higher education located in counties on the Oregon border to implement tuition policies that correspond to Oregon policies. The Columbia Basin Community College, Walla Walla Community College, and the Tri-Cities branch of Washington State University are added to the list of participating Washington institutions of higher education.

Residents of the Oregon counties of Gilliam, Hood River, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, and Wasco are added for eligibility to enroll at the Washington community colleges participating in the program, and residents of the counties of Morrow, Umatilla, Union and Wallowa are added for eligibility to enroll at the Tri-Cities and Vancouver branches of Washington State University.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available on the original bill.

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

Testimony For: By allowing the exchange of students between our borders, we better serve the employment needs of our community and keep students close to their home.

Some of our college programs need the enrollments. This will help.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Carlson, prime sponsor; Bruce Botka, Higher Education Coordinating Board; Anthony Birch, Clark College; and Jane Yung Dennie, Washington State University.