

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HCR 4409

As Reported by House Committee On:
Capital Budget

Brief Description: Creating a joint select committee to review future facilities needs for higher education.

Sponsors: Representatives Alexander, Murray, Kenney, Cox, O'Brien, D. Schmidt, Hankins, McIntire, Edwards and Esser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Capital Budget: 3/2/01, 3/8/01 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates a 12 member joint select committee to review the facility needs of higher education, both new facilities and preservation of existing facilities, and report its findings to the 2002 session of the Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Alexander, Republican Co-Chair; Murray, Democratic Co-Chair; Armstrong, Republican Vice Chair; Esser, Republican Vice Chair; McIntire, Democratic Vice Chair; Barlean, Bush, Casada, Hankins, Hunt, Lantz, O'Brien, Ogden, Poulsen, Reardon, Schoesler, Veloria and Woods.

Staff: Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

Background:

The Higher Education Coordinating Board is charged by the Legislature with coordinating the activities of higher education institutions in Washington and developing and updating a master plan for higher education in Washington. The state master plan for higher education, updated in 2000, expects enrollment in postsecondary education to increase significantly by the year 2010.

The Governor's 2020 Commission on the Future of Postsecondary Education also

recommends increasing the higher education enrollment goal to better respond to the growing demands of a knowledge-based economy and challenged the state to find creative solutions to serve the growing number of people without building new college campuses.

Higher education institutions have approximately 44 million square feet of facilities, which is approximately 61 percent of total state-owned facilities. In the 1999-01 biennium, the higher education portion of the Capital Budget is 47 percent of the total authorized debt limit bonds and 32 percent of total new appropriations. The Governor's 2001-03 Capital Budget request is 47 percent and 26 percent, respectively. Appropriations in the past few bienniums have been concentrated in new projects on the main campuses, branch campuses and education centers, and preservation/renewal of existing facilities. Higher education institutions indicate there is a significant backlog of deferred maintenance, renewal and modernization.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A joint House and Senate committee on the future higher education facilities is appointed to review the higher education enrollment levels in the master plan, review the facility needs for future students, review the preservation needs for higher education facilities, and review the funding options for preservation and additional higher education facilities.

The joint committee consists of six members from the House and six from the Senate, two members each from the House Capital Budget Committee, House Appropriations Committee, and House Higher Education Committee, four members from the Senate Ways and Means Committee, and two members from the Senate Higher Education Committee. The committee must report its findings and recommendations at the 2002 legislative session.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill removes specific enrollment projections and increases the size of the committee from eight to 12 members.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Testimony For: This is a very significant issue for higher education in this state. It is important for the state to better understand and address the facility needs of higher education institutions, both new facilities and preservation of existing facilities. The Higher Education Coordinating Board is eager to help in this effort. Enrollment projections are important considerations.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Jim Reed and John Fricky, Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB); and Judy McNichol, Western Washington University.