

Higher Education Committee

SB 5921

Brief Description: *Authorizing doctorate level degrees in physical therapy at Eastern Washington University.*

Sponsors: *By Senators Kohl-Welles, Horn, Sheahan, McAuliffe, West, McCaslin, Carlson, Morton, Jacobsen, B. Sheldon, Shin and Parlette.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Authorizes the Board of Trustees of Eastern Washington University to offer a doctorate level degree in physical therapy subject to review and approval by the Higher Education Coordinating Board.*

Hearing Date: *3/21/01*

Staff: *Marsha Reilly (786-7135).*

Background:

Currently, statute allows the regional universities, including Eastern Washington University, to offer bachelor's and master's level degrees. Washington State University and the University of Washington are authorized to offer bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees.

The University of Washington offers both master's and doctorate degrees in physical therapy. Their doctorate degree is a Ph.D. which is a post-professional degree. The only other university in Washington that offers a physical therapy program is the University of Puget Sound, and they currently offer a master's level degree.

The national accrediting association for physical therapy has announced that the profession is moving to a doctorate (DPT) as the entry-level degree.

Regionally, Pacific University, Idaho State University, the University of Montana, the University of Colorado, and Northern Arizona University are planning to convert to a

doctorate degree or are already in stages of conversion.

Summary of Bill:

This bill authorizes the Board of Trustees at Eastern Washington University to offer a doctorate degree in Physical Therapy. They propose to offer the DPT, a professional degree. The program must meet the program approval requirements of the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

On February 19, 2001, the companion bills “ HB 1910 “ was heard in this committee. SB 5921 is exactly the same as HB 1910.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Available.*

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