

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1852

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to facilitating collaboration among health care work force stakeholders to address the health care personnel shortage.

Brief Description: Facilitating collaboration among health care work force stakeholders to address the health care personnel shortage.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Schual-Berke, Conway, Cox, Cody, Kenney, Pflug, Clements, O'Brien, Chase, Morrell, Veloria and Skinner).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/26/03, 3/4/03 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/13/03, 96-0.

Passed Senate: 4/16/03, 49-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Directs the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board to facilitate collaboration among health care stakeholders and develop a strategic plan to address health care personnel shortages.
- Repeals current statutes regarding health care personnel resource planning.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Kenney, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Cox, Ranking Minority Member; Priest, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Boldt, Buck, Chase, Clements, Condotta, Gombosky, Jarrett, Lantz, McCoy and Morrell.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Health Personnel Resource Plan (HPRP): In 1991 the Legislature directed six state education and health agencies to develop a biennial plan for identifying shortages in health personnel and design and implement activities intended to remedy those shortages. The legislation detailed numerous components expected in the plan, including assessment of future health care training needs; data on the number, type, and location of health personnel in the state; and strategies for providing necessary training and education for health personnel. Each higher education institution was expected to develop institution-level plans for curriculum, programs, and internship and residency opportunities to address the needs identified in the state plan.

Approximately \$600,000 per biennium was provided to the Department of Health to oversee the HPRP from 1991-93 through 1995-97. Funding for the HPRP was eliminated in 1997-99 and, although references to the plan remain in statute, the planning has been discontinued.

Health Care Personnel Shortage Task Force (Task Force): In 2002 four legislators requested that the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) convene a task force of labor, business, education, and health care leaders to address the health care personnel shortage in Washington. In January 2003 the Task Force reported back to the Legislature with a state strategic plan built on six goals and accompanying recommendations for action. The sixth goal was to "develop a mechanism to ensure continued collaboration among stakeholders, track progress, create accountability for fulfilling this plan, and to plan for future health workforce needs."

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

The WTECB is directed to facilitate ongoing collaboration among stakeholders to address the health care personnel shortage and establish and maintain a state strategic plan for ensuring an adequate supply of personnel. Reports are due to the Governor and Legislature by December 31, 2003, and annually thereafter, on the progress of the plan, along with any additional recommendations.

Statutes creating and referencing a previous plan (the HPRP) are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: There is a need to continue the work of the previous task force and

make the work go forward under the purview of an already established board. This is not just another plan, but a central place to share and disperse information; to develop strategies to get people into the workforce where they are needed; and to facilitate communication among the various parties. Convening stakeholders fits perfectly with the mission of the WTECB. Continuing the work takes coordination of effort and a forum for discussion. There are suggested amendments to clarify the WTECB's role with the plan and to minimize any fiscal impact on the Department of Health regarding data collection. This bill is important to communicate that this work has the blessing of the Legislature. It adds a level of credibility and strength to the work.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Schual-Berke, prime sponsor; Mary Selecky, Department of Health; Ellen O'Brien Saunders, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Troy Hutson, Washington State Hospital Association; and Ellie Menzies, Service Employees International Union.