
Higher Education Committee

HB 2843

Brief Description: Creating the Cascadia State University at Bothell.

Sponsors: Representatives Sommers, Kenney, Cox, Fromhold, Sehlin, Priest, Chase, McCoy, Ormsby and Lantz.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a new regional university effective July 1, 2005: Cascadia State University in Bothell.
- Transfers property, assets, and staff of the University of Washington Bothell and Cascadia Community College to the new university.
- Directs the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to convene a transition task force to identify issues and recommend solutions, including legislation, necessary to create the new university by December 15, 2004.
- Directs the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to conduct a feasibility study for additional baccalaureate and graduate education in Vancouver, with a report due December 15, 2004. Provides \$90,000 for the study.

Hearing Date: 1/27/04

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

North King and South Snohomish County.

History: When the Legislature authorized creation of five higher education branch campuses in 1989, the University of Washington (UW) was directed to operate one branch campus in the Bothell-Woodinville area.

At approximately the same time, a study by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) indicated that the area with the greatest recent population growth, greatest need for education services, and least access to community college services was the North King County and South Snohomish County region. In the 1991-93 capital budget, the Legislature appropriated funds to plan and design a new community college.

In 1992, at the request of a number of legislators, the SBCTC modified the scope of its study to include an analysis of the feasibility of collocating the new community college with the UW's branch campus in the Bothell-Woodinville area.

In December 1992, outgoing Governor Gardner proposed creation of a new four-year regional university: Cascade University. The 1993 Legislature instead directed the HECB to study alternative organizational models for meeting the higher education and workforce training needs of North King and South Snohomish Counties. In its report, the HECB supported creation of both a new community college and continued development of an upper division and graduate level branch campus of the UW, collocated on a single campus.

The 1994 Legislature created the 30th community college district: Cascadia Community College (Cascadia). The same legislation directed the UW Bothell campus to be collocated with the new community college. The UW Bothell operated in leased facilities until the new campus opened in Fall 2000. Cascadia began enrolling students in Fall 2000.

Current Status: The UW Bothell currently enrolls 1,190 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. About one-third of the students are enrolled in an Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences program at the undergraduate level. Significant numbers of students are also enrolled in business and computer and software systems. The UW Bothell also offers nursing degrees at the undergraduate and graduate level and master's degree and teaching certificate programs in education. Two-thirds of students transfer from community colleges. About one-fifth transfer from the main campus in Seattle.

Cascadia currently enrolls 1,412 state-funded FTE students, with more than three-fourths of the students intending to transfer to a baccalaureate program. The technical degrees and certificates offered by Cascadia focus on computer and software applications, website design and management, and network support. Cascadia has a five-member board of trustees appointed by the Governor as its governing board.

On the shared campus, the UW Bothell is primarily housed in two separate buildings on the south end of campus and Cascadia is in a building on the north end of campus. A central building is shared by both institutions and houses the library, media center, bookstore, and other common operations. Maintenance, safety, and transportation are managed through a joint operating agreement.

Southwest Washington.

The Legislature directed the Washington State University (WSU) to operate a branch campus in the Vancouver area. The WSU Vancouver campus currently enrolls 1,219 FTE students and offers a variety of degree programs, with enrollment concentrated in business, education, and social sciences. Most students transfer from two community colleges: Clark College in Vancouver and Lower Columbia College in Longview.

To attract greater numbers of students in high demand fields and support regional economic growth, the three institutions have been developing an Engineering and Science Institute where students enroll jointly at the WSU Vancouver and a community college as freshmen. According to a recent study of branch campuses, community leaders are energized by the Engineering and Science Institute, although the concept means different things to different people. Some see it as a first step toward the WSU Vancouver becoming a four-year institution; others see it as a way to

improve transfer and lend prestige to the two plus two model of education. The 2003 Legislature provided \$2.7 million in support of this initiative for the 2003-05 biennium, and the WSU Vancouver campus received an additional \$663,000 for high demand enrollments for the 2004-05 academic year.

Summary of Bill:

North King and South Snohomish County.

Effective July 1, 2005, a new regional university is created called Cascadia State University at Bothell. The property, real estate, assets, staff, and other resources of the UW Bothell and Cascadia Community College are transferred to Cascadia State University.

A board of trustees for the new university is created. The board of trustees for the community college also serves as the board for the new university during the transition. The Governor appoints two additional members. As of July 1, 2005, the members continue as the board for Cascadia State University. Further operation of the board, including appointment of a student member, is the same as the other regional universities.

Definitions of a regional university or a four-year institution of higher education in some statutes are changed to include Cascadia State University.

The HECB convenes a transition task force to identify issues and propose solutions regarding the creation of the new university. The task force report, including any additional legislation necessary for an orderly transition, is due to the Legislature by December 15, 2004. Issues to be addressed by the task force include:

- Phase-out of non-baccalaureate programs and possible transfer of equipment, programs, and staff to a community college;
- Enrollment and admission status of current students and their eligibility to complete degrees;
- Appropriate general fund support and tuition for the new university, commensurate with its mission; and
- Administrative and staffing efficiencies resulting from the merger.

Southwest Washington.

The Institute must conduct a feasibility study for the creation of additional baccalaureate and graduate opportunities for public higher education in Vancouver. The study includes:

1. A detailed regional analysis of student demand and supply of degree programs, including potential economic development and consultation with community leaders;
2. Consideration of alternative models for providing education in the region;
3. Examination of the possible role and mission of a four-year university, including the possibility of an innovative combination of instruction and research to meet the region's needs for access and expansion of the region's economic viability; and
4. A comparison of short and long-term costs.

Findings from the study are due December 15, 2004. Ninety-thousand dollars is appropriated for the study.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 22, 2004.

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