

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6129

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, January 22, 2004

Title: An act relating to membership on the higher education coordinating board.

Brief Description: Changing membership on the higher education coordinating board.

Sponsors: Senators Carlson, Horn and Schmidt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/12/04, 1/22/04 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6129 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Carlson, Chair; Schmidt, Vice Chair; Kohl-Welles, Pflug, B. Sheldon and Shin.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) was created in 1985 to provide planning, coordinating, monitoring and policy analysis for higher education in Washington in cooperation and consultation with the institutions' autonomous governing boards and with all other segments of postsecondary education. In creating the HECB, the Legislature intended that the board represent the broad public interest above the interests of individual colleges and universities. In addition, this board administers all of the state's student financial aid programs.

The HECB is a 10-member board appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate – one of the members is a student. The student member serves a one-year term. The other members serve four-year terms. Following the term of the current chair, who serves at the pleasure of the Governor, subsequent chairs will be chosen by and from the membership.

Summary of Substitute Bill: After June 30, 2004, the Higher Education Coordinating Board consists of 12 members: five members representing the public for a four-year term and one student member for a one-year term are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate; one member is the Superintendent of Public Instruction whose term runs concurrent with the state office; and holding two-year terms are one member representing the two-year system appointed by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), one member representing the research universities appointed by the President of the University of Washington and the President of Washington State University; one member representing the comprehensive universities selected through a process developed by the Council of Presidents; one four-year faculty member appointed by a Council of Faculty Representatives process; and one two-year faculty member appointed by the SBCTC.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: HECB membership increases from ten to 12 people. Public membership is reduced from seven to five. Added to the board are representatives for the research universities, the comprehensive universities, the four-year faculty and the two-year faculty.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Education reform requires that SPI be more involved in the decisions of the HECB. And, because relevant sectors of higher education believe they are not consulted by the HECB, they should be members of the board. The intent of the legislation is appreciated.

Testimony Against: With concerns: It would be difficult to legislate behavior. Constituency boards become cumbersome and you must be careful to include as many constituencies as will be affected such as WTECB and WFT. The nature of the board is changed from neutrality to a constituency-based approach. There was more than one comment that the new Executive Director of the HECB must be given a chance. Better communication might result from a high level advisory group to the board.

Testified: Senator Don Carlson, prime sponsor (pro); **WITH CONCERNS:** Larry Davis, SBE; Sandy Wall, SBCTC; Terry Teale, COP; Kyra Kester, OSPI; Ann Anderson, CWU; Ruta Fanning, HECB; Bryan Wilson, WTECB