

2707

Sponsor(s): Representatives Kenney, Priest, Sommers, Jarrett, McCoy, Chase and Hudgins

Brief Description: Reaffirming the mission of the higher education branch campuses. Revised for 1st Substitute: Regarding higher education branch campuses.

**HB 2707 - DIGEST**

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 1ST SUB)

Finds the policy landscape in higher education has changed since the original creation of the branch campuses. Demand for access to baccalaureate and graduate education is increasing rapidly. The state must prioritize additional expenditures in higher education to ensure the most cost-effective investment of public resources.

Declares an intent to reaffirm the mission of Washington's higher education branch campuses and set the course for their continued future expansion and development to meet the education needs of the citizens of Washington state in a cost-effective manner.

Declares that the primary mission of the five higher education branch campuses created under chapter 28B.45 RCW is to expand access to baccalaureate and master's level graduate education in under-served urban areas of the state. The branch campuses shall place a priority on providing instruction and related activities to support degree and certificate programs.

Declares an intent that branch campuses be funded at a level consistent with their primary mission and commensurate with upper division and graduate level degree programs at the comprehensive universities.

Directs the higher education coordinating board to evaluate faculty workload, research activities, and funding for research at the branch campuses to identify an appropriate funding level for each campus. By December 1, 2005, the board shall recommend a strategy to transition overall funding to implement legislative intent.

Directs the board to also recommend a growth plan for each branch campus to achieve economies of scale in operation and coordinate expansion in both enrollment and facilities.

Repeals RCW 28B.45.070, 28B.80.500, and 28B.80.520.