

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6483

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education, January 25, 2006

Title: An act relating to expanding opportunities for graduating secondary school students to enter apprenticeships.

Brief Description: Expanding apprenticeship opportunities for high school graduates.

Sponsors: Senators Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, Rasmussen, Franklin, Haugen, Berkey, Keiser, Kline, Regala, Eide, Brown, Thibaudeau, Schmidt, Spanel and Shin; by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: 1/18/06, 1/25/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING, K-12 & HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6483 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Higher Education; Weinstein, Vice Chair, Early Learning & K-12; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Carrell, Delvin, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Rasmussen, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Shin.

Staff: Stephanie Yurcisin (786-7438)

Background: Apprenticeship programs enable individuals to learn trades and occupations through a combination of on-the-job training and related supplemental instruction. Programs are sponsored by joint employers and labor groups, individual employers, or employer associations. Sponsoring groups make up the apprenticeship committee that oversees the programs. By satisfactorily completing a direct-entry apprenticeship program, an individual learns required skills and will receive an interview for the desired position.

Each Center of Excellence (Center), as designated by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), focuses on a targeted industry. A targeted industry is defined as one that is strategic to the economic growth of a region or the state. The mission of a Center includes providing innovative and responsive education, translating industry research into best practices, and building a competitive workforce.

The Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC) is the administrative arm of the apprenticeship section of the Department of Labor and Industries. The WSATC has the authority to, among other things, establish standards for apprenticeship programs, implement the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Act, and encourage the establishment of apprenticeship programs and committees.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Three programs are implemented to expand opportunities for secondary school students to prepare for technical careers and related internships.

Centers, as designated by the SBCTC, as well as other colleges with a high density of apprenticeship programs, must act as a broker of information and resources on available grants, scholarship opportunities, job openings, and industries of growth.

WSATC, together with state-approved apprenticeship training programs, must lead and coordinate an educational outreach program about apprenticeship and career opportunities for middle and secondary school students and educators.

The WSATC must approve and oversee direct-entry programs for graduating secondary students into building and construction-related apprenticeships by:

- 1) assisting individual school districts in using and leveraging existing resources;
- 2) developing guidelines for direct-entry programs, with input from apprenticeship coordinators, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the SBCTC, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, the Governor's policy office, and other interested parties; and
- 3) awarding ten incentive grants to school districts for personnel to implement agreements with local apprenticeships based on state apprenticeship use requirements to accept appropriately trained graduating secondary school students into apprenticeship programs.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill clarifies the role that the Centers of Excellence are being asked to play.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Revised fiscal note available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This streamlined approach will allow individuals to earn a diploma one week and then to start an apprenticeship the following week. The students who use this direct-entry approach are exceptionally well-prepared and act very professional. Allowing young people to become involved in trades is a great goal. This bill would greatly expand the opportunities for apprenticeship in our state. The average age of journey-level workers is almost fifty, so we need to ensure that a significant number of younger apprentices are trained to be able to fill openings that will occur in the coming years. Addressing the skills gap issue should be a priority issue for the state, and this will help to solve the problem.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: John Aultman, New Market Skills Centers; Chuck Gotcher, Northwest Carpenters; Cathy Herford, Parent; Debora Merle, Office of the Governor; Patrick Woods, Susan Crane, Washington Apprenticeship Council; Dave Johnson, Washington State Building & Construction Trades Council; John Littel, Carpenter's Union; Kathleen Lopp, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education; Madeline Thompson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor.