

**HB 2630-S - DIGEST**

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 2ND SUB)

Provides that the college board shall, with the assistance of the work force training and education coordinating board and a nonprofit organization that has been established to address work force development issues by a recognized statewide organization of employers representing a majority of employers in the state: (1) Identify high demand occupations, which are occupations where employer demand for workers exceeds the supply of qualified job applicants;

(2) Convene or use existing industry groups, such as industry skill panels or other industry or occupational entities, to identify the skill sets that workers need in the high demand occupations;

(3) Develop credentials that are recognized by postsecondary institutions and employers statewide and that are based on the attainment of the skill sets needed in occupations in high demand sectors;

(4) Market the credentials or certificates to potential students and employers as a way for them to advance in their careers; and

(5) Gain recognition of the credentials or certificates by employers.

Directs the college board to develop and implement a work force education program known as the opportunity grant program to provide funding for low-income students enrolled in the program, including but not limited to funding tuition, books, fees, and child care expenses.

Requires the college board to: (1) Begin developing the program no later than March 15, 2006, with student enrollment to begin no later than January 1, 2007; and

(2) Submit a progress report to the fiscal and higher education committees of the legislature by January 15, 2008.

Appropriates the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, from the general fund to the state board for community and technical colleges for the purposes of this act. Expenditure of moneys appropriated in this provision is contingent on receipt of matching funds from a nonstate source.

Appropriates the sum of five million dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, from the general fund to the state board for community and technical colleges for the purposes of this act.

Appropriates the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, from the general fund to the Washington institute for public policy for the purposes of this act.