

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HCR 4404

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Brief Description: Approving the 2006 update to the state comprehensive plan for workforce training.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Anderson, Wallace, Sells, Jarrett, Ormsby, Linville and Conway; by request of Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/7/07, 2/21/07 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requests approval of the 2006 update to the state Comprehensive Plan, *High Skills, High Wages*.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Wallace, Chair; Sells, Vice Chair; Anderson, Ranking Minority Member; Buri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hasegawa, McIntire and Sommers.

Staff: Jennifer Thornton (786-7111).

Background:

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) was created in 1991 to provide planning, coordination, evaluation, monitoring, policy analysis for the state training system as a whole, and advice to the Governor and Legislature concerning the training system.

The WTECB updates the State Comprehensive Plan for Workforce Training and Education (Comprehensive Plan) every two years. The Legislature is required, following public hearings, to approve or make changes to the updates. The provisions of the Comprehensive

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Plan and its updates that are approved by the Legislature become the state's workforce policy unless legislation is enacted to alter the policies.

The Comprehensive Plan includes the following 10 strategic opportunities for the next two years:

- (1) increase high school graduation rates;
- (2) expand the availability of career pathways that span secondary and postsecondary education and training;
- (3) increase postsecondary education and training capacity;
- (4) increase financial aid and retention support for workforce education students;
- (5) increase adult basic education skills and English language instruction that is integrated with occupational skills training;
- (6) improve coordination between workforce and economic development in key economic clusters;
- (7) expand and sustain skill panels;
- (8) expand customized training for current workers;
- (9) expand the availability of a work readiness credential; and
- (10) develop state and local agreements on service integration to improve services to customers.

Summary of Bill:

The House of Representatives and Senate approve the 2006 update to the state Comprehensive Plan, *High Skills, High Wages*, that is submitted by the WTECB.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is the state's strategic plan for workforce development, and is based on conversations with many stakeholders. This is a comprehensive document that holds parties accountable, and shows how integration is happening throughout the workforce development system. There are many players, and it provides a great tutorial on how the system works together. This is an essential product of the WTECB, and it is revisited every two years. This is the eighth time it has come before the Legislature. *High Skills, High Wages* examines labor market demands, the population, and aligns the workforce system with the needs of the economy. It also includes performance measures.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Kenney, prime sponsor; Jim Crabbe, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Don Bennett, Workforce Training and

Education Coordinating Board; and Mike Hudson, Association of Washington Business and the Institute for Workforce Development and Economic Sustainability.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.