

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6261

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to adult youth programs.

Brief Description: Requiring the workforce training and education coordinating board to research and evaluate work and learning programs for adult youth.

Sponsors: Senators Kilmer, Rockefeller, Schoesler, Shin, Fraser and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/20/08, 2/27/08 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)

- Requires the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board to work with other agencies to conduct research and evaluation on work and learning programs that serve adult youth.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Wallace, Chair; Sells, Vice Chair; Hasegawa, McIntire, Roberts and Sommers.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Anderson, Ranking Minority Member; Hankins and Schmick.

Staff: Andi Smith (786-7304).

Background:

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) is a tripartite partnership of business, labor, and government with a membership of 11. The WTECB advises the Governor and Legislature on workforce development policy, ensures that the state's workforce preparation services and programs work together, and evaluates

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performance. The WTECB also advocates for the non-baccalaureate training and education needs of the workers who account for about 75 percent of Washington's workforce.

The WTECB is also responsible for performing functions necessary to comply with federal directives related to workforce education. These duties include advising the Legislature and Governor on mechanisms for integrating federal initiatives into the state's workforce development system. As such, the WTECB ensures coordination between the state agencies and local partners that administer a range of state and federal programs that serve youth and adults.

According to the 2006 Workforce Development Directory, 19 percent of total funding for workforce development came from the federal government, while 81 percent came from state sources. There are six separate programs geared specifically at youth, 14 programs geared toward adults, while another 19 programs are aimed at adult workers with barriers to employment. Each of the programs can be accessed variously through WorkSource Centers, community and technical colleges, public schools, as well as federal, state, and local non-profit agencies around the state.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The WTECB conducts research and evaluates programs and training systems designed to provide comprehensive work and learning programs for adult youth. The WTECB must consult with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Employment Security Department, and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges in conducting the research and analysis. The WTECB is also required to submit a report, including demographic and income information, to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by November 15, 2010, and every two years thereafter.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The amended bill includes an intent section, removes specific references to 18 to 24 year olds and makes those references more approximate, and adds a reporting requirement. The report must be submitted to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by November 15, 2008, and every two years thereafter and must include demographic and income data.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void if not funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The number one issue with workforce development is finding skilled workers. The adult youth age band has very high unemployment and economic development councils have heard about problems with the employability of this group. The WTECB is a very appropriate entity to explore and address these issues.

The unemployment rate in Washington is usually quite good for the whole population, the band between 18 to 24 year olds is 17 percent, one of the highest in the nation. This band always has had a higher rate, but Washington is one of the highest in the nation. The WTECB would like to do research to find out what is going on and what happens to them after they age out of the band.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Kilmer, prime sponsor; and Eleni Papadakis, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.