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**Higher Education Committee**

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**HB 3047**

**Brief Description:** Requiring disclosure of certain information relating to higher education course materials.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Armstrong, Newhouse and Upthegrove.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires affiliated bookstores disclose information on required course materials at least four weeks before the start of class.

**Hearing Date:** 1/30/08

**Staff:** Andi Smith (786-7304).

**Background:**

A 2005 study by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that since 1986, textbook prices have nearly tripled, increasing by 186 percent. The GAO reports that the price of textbooks has increased in recent years largely due to increases in costs associated with new features, such as Web sites and other instructional supplements. Publishers told the GAO they have increased their investments in the development of supplements to meet the demands of a changing postsecondary market.

Keeping current with consumers often entails re-issuing editions with modernized text, graphics and supplemental Web-content. According to a study conducted in California by the California Student Public Interest Research Group, the average release time between textbook editions is 3.8 years. Of the textbook surveyed, new editions cost 58 percent more than the older version, rising to an average cost of \$102.44 (in 2005).

Many students are buying both used and new books from sources outside the affiliated campus book store. Web sites like *Amazon*, *ECampus* and *Cheapest Textbooks* are increasing in popularity, as is sourcing books from overseas Web sites, where the prices may be significantly cheaper for new books though doing so means longer shipping times and no return.

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In 2006, the Legislature passed Substitute House Bill 3087 to give students at public four-year institutions more choices when purchasing educational materials and to encourage faculty and staff to work with bookstores and publishers to implement the least costly option to students without sacrificing educational content. In 2007, the Legislature passed House Bill 1224 which added community and technical colleges to the list of schools covered by the 2006 legislation.

**Summary of Bill:**

Affiliated bookstores are required to disclose information on required course materials at least four weeks prior to the start of the class for which the materials are required. Course material information includes title, author(s), edition, price, and International Standard Book Number.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 21, 2008.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.