

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5776

C 179 L 09
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regarding student fees, charges, and assessments.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators McDermott, Schoesler, Fairley, Oemig, Jarrett and Kohl-Welles).

Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development
House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs

Background: In addition to tuition fees, students at institutions of higher education are charged services and activities fees. These fees are dedicated to fund student activities and programs as well as for repaying bonds and other indebtedness for facilities such as dormitories, hospitals, dining halls, parking facilities, and student, faculty, and employee housing. Students have a strong voice in recommending budgets for services and activities fees through the Services and Activities Fee Committee.

Generally, the use of public funds for lobbying is prohibited. This does not preclude an agency officer or employee from communicating with the Legislature for requests for legislative action or appropriations necessary for the business of the agency, or communicating on matters pertaining to the agency. Agencies that expend public funds for restricted lobbying purposes are required to file quarterly statements with the Public Disclosure Commission.

All six public baccalaureate institutions in the state of Washington are members of the Washington Student Lobby (WSL). In 2007 Bellevue Community College became the first two-year school to join. Other community colleges, technical colleges, and branch campuses often participate as non-voting members. Membership in the WSL is required for a student body to be able to vote and receive the legislative support services provided by the WSL.

Summary: Voluntary student fees for each academic year, may be created or increased by a majority vote of the student government or its equivalent or by a referendum presented to the student body. The use of those fees is not subject to the statute governing the use of public funds for lobbying.

Votes on Final Passage:

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.

Senate 42 6
House 60 38

Effective: July 26, 2009