

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6706

As of February 1, 2010

Title: An act relating to commercialization of research at state universities.

Brief Description: Concerning the commercialization of research at state universities.

Sponsors: Senators Murray, Delvin, Kastama, Shin, Marr, Kilmer and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Economic Development, Trade & Innovation: 1/28/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE & INNOVATION

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

Background: In 2009 the Legislature directed the Department of Commerce, in E2SSB 6015, to report on how the state can best encourage and support innovation and commercialization in the life sciences and information technology sectors. The department's report recommended, among other things, authorizing universities to create and manage a bridge funding program and provide other resources to support companies created around university-based research.

Summary of Bill: The mission of the state universities includes commercializing research and strengthening university-industry relationships. The state universities are to:

- provide collaborative research and tech-transfer opportunities;
- make commercialization processes and resources accessible;
- pair researchers, entrepreneurs, and investors through workshops, events, and an interactive website;
- provide opportunities for training through direct involvement in research and industry interactions; and
- conduct forums for interaction and collaboration between tech-based industries and academic institutions.

State universities are authorized to establish and administer bridge funding programs with federal and private funds. Research employees may use public resources to facilitate the formation of companies using university-based research.

Appropriation: None.

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.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 25, 2010.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This came out of recommendations from the E2SSB 6015 group. This will help clear up some gray areas. Entrepreneurs and investors may work for a long time with researchers to start a company. Many companies formed around university research have multiple owners. When universities assist in starting research-based companies, it is typical for the university to have equity arrangements, royalty arrangements, or cost recovery agreements in place. WSU supports this legislation.

OTHER: It would be good to have more flexibility in the bill.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Fred Holt, UW; Shawn Hoey, WSU.

OTHER: Shawn Hoey, WSU.