
Higher Education Committee

HB 1792

Brief Description: Concerning the University Center of North Puget Sound.

Sponsors: Representatives Sells, Hope, Dunshee, Haler, McCoy, Moscoso and Lias.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Assigns management and leadership of the University Center at Everett Community College to Washington State University to meet demands for baccalaureate and graduate degrees in Everett, north Snohomish, Island, and Skagit counties and Washington, particularly in high employer demand programs of study.
- Renames the center, “the University Center of North Puget Sound” upon transfer of management.
- Directs the completion of a long range plan by July 1, 2013 and transfers management of the center to Washington State University on July 1, 2014 dependent on certain conditions.
- Establishes a Coordinating and Planning Council to oversee the center and program development.
- Establishes criteria for program mix and other management processes at the University Center of North Puget Sound.

Hearing Date: 2/10/11

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

Research by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) has found that certain regions in the state do not have adequate access to upper division baccalaureate education or graduate degrees. Access to higher education in north King and Snohomish, Island, and Skagit Counties has been the subject of many studies

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.

since 1988. In 1989 the Legislature established the University of Washington-Bothell (UWB) campus.

In 2005 Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1794 directed Everett Community College, in collaboration with community and business leaders, other higher education institutions, and the HECB, to develop an educational plan for the region based on the university center model. The group was directed to submit a plan to the Legislature in December 2005 and the HECB was directed to provide a progress report in 2008.

The HECB 2008 report found that the three-county area is large, geographically diverse and forecast to experience continued significant population growth to 2025 and beyond. The report forecast an unmet need for over 10,700 full-time equivalent students in 2025 without increased higher education service delivery. The HECB found that young adults aged 17 to 24 make up 74 percent of the need. Based on employer interviews, the report found that there were needs for engineering and engineering technology program offerings in addition to a variety of other high demand programs of study.

In April of 2009, the University Center at Everett Community College was established at Gray Wolf Hall. The University Center at Everett Community College offers over 20 bachelor's and master's degrees from six partner universities.

In 2010 Legislation was enacted (House Bill 2694) authorizing the establishment of a bachelor of science in nursing at the University Center at Everett Community College, in partnership with UWB.

Summary of Bill:

Management and leadership of the University Center at Everett Community College is assigned to Washington State University (WSU) to meet higher education needs of Everett, north Snohomish, Island, and Skagit counties and Washington. The center is renamed “the University Center of North Puget Sound” (Center) upon transfer of management. A long-range plan is to be completed by July 1, 2013, and management of the Center is to be transferred to WSU on July 1, 2014 dependent on certain conditions. Transfer of management depends on WSU establishing an engineering degree program at the Center and the completion of the long-range plan.

The long-range plan builds on current degrees offered by other baccalaureate institutions at the Center, and includes other components to meet student, employer and regional needs for higher education opportunities. A Coordinating and Planning Council (Council) is established to oversee the Center and program development. The Council may alter its own membership if all members agree.

Criteria are established for program delivery and mix of offerings. Processes are also established for capital budget requests; building design and management; and conflict resolution. The Office of the Code Reviser is directed to update statutory references to the Center upon transfer of the Center to WSU and repeals the chapter on a higher education consortium that is no longer applicable.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 2/8/2011.

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