
Higher Education Committee

SSB 5982

Brief Description: Creating the joint center for aerospace technology innovation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Economic Development, Trade & Innovation (originally sponsored by Senators Kastama, Shin, Hobbs, Harper, Eide, Kilmer, Conway, Sheldon, Haugen, Kohl-Welles, Frockt, Keiser, Fain, Tom, Chase and McAuliffe; by request of Governor Gregoire).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates the Joint Center for Aerospace Technology (Center) innovation to pursue joint industry-university research.
- Creates a board of directors for the Center that is comprised of representatives from the aerospace industry and higher.
- Requires the Center to develop an operating plan by June 30, 2013 and submit a biennial report to the Governor and Legislature.

Hearing Date: 2/16/12

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

According to a 2009 study conducted for the Snohomish County Economic Development Council, there are over 250 aerospace companies in Washington and the business activity generated results in over \$36 billion in economic value to the state. When aerospace suppliers are included the number of Washington aerospace companies grows to 600.

The study also found that Washington is the highest per capita aerospace employer of all the states, with 44 jobs per 1,000 workers and that aerospace accounts for nearly one-sixth of Washington's Gross State product.

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.

In response to global competition, a number of states have developed strategies to strengthen academic/industry collaboration, including research development, to support their aerospace industry.

Summary of Bill:

The Joint Center for Aerospace Technology Innovation (Center) is created to pursue joint industry-university research that can be used in aerospace firms, enhance the education of engineering students, and work with the aerospace industry to identify research needs and opportunities to transfer off-the-shelf technologies. The Center is to operate as a multi-institutional center under the joint authority of the University of Washington and Washington State University.

The Center will have a board of directors appointed by the Governor, representing a cross-section of the aerospace industry and higher education. The board is to:

- hire an executive director;
- identify research areas to benefit the aerospace industry in Washington;
- identify entrepreneurial researchers and the steps the universities will take to recruit such researchers;
- assist firms to integrate existing technologies into their operations;
- align the Center's activities with those of Impact Washington and Innovate Washington;
- ensure that students enrolled in an aerospace engineering curriculum have direct experience with aerospace firms;
- assist researchers and firms in guarding intellectual property;
- promote collaboration between industry and faculty; and
- develop non-state support for research.

By June 30, 2013, the board is to develop an operating plan that includes specifics on how the Center will accomplish its duties. The board is to provide a biennial report to the Legislature and the Governor. The Center may solicit funds from a variety of sources to carry out its obligations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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