

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5997

As Passed House - Amended:

February 27, 2012

Title: An act relating to the Olympic natural resources center.

Brief Description: Regarding the Olympic natural resources center.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Energy, Natural Resources & Marine Waters (originally sponsored by Senator Hargrove).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/16/12, 2/20/12 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 2/27/12, 53-43.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House)

- Provides legislative authority for the Olympic Natural Resources Center Policy Advisory Board with members appointed by the Governor.
- Replaces references to the College of Forest Resources with the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Carlyle, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Hasegawa, Pollet, Reykdal, Sells, Springer and Wylie.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Parker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Asay, Buys, Crouse, Fagan, Warnick and Zeiger.

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

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.

Following a recommendation made by the Commission on Old Growth Alternatives for Washington's Forest Trust Lands, the Legislature created the Olympic Natural Resources Center (ONRC) as part of the University of Washington in 1991. The mission of the ONRC is to conduct research and education on natural resource management practices that integrate ecological and economic values.

To assist the ONRC in achieving its mission, the Legislature directed the Governor to appoint an 11-member ONRC Policy Advisory Board. Under current law, the ONRC director has the authority to appoint a scientific or technical committee. The ONRC Policy Advisory Board was eliminated in an omnibus bill (House Bill 2617) effective July 1, 2010. Since then, the ONRC co-directors have requested that the members of the former Policy Advisory Board continue in an advisory capacity as the ONRC Advisory Committee.

The College of Forest Resources' name changed to the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences on January 1, 2012.

Summary of Bill:

Legislative authority is provided for the ONRC Policy Advisory Board with members chosen by the Governor. The ONRC statutes are updated to reflect the name change of the College of Forest Resources to the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences at the University of Washington. Statutes are updated to reflect the organizational change of the College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences from a college to a school.

The ONRC Policy Advisory Board members serve for four-years, may be reappointed, and serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The institution is proud of the accomplishments of the ONRC. The institutions would be equally happy to work with the Policy Advisory Board that was established in legislation last year. There are potentially other vehicles to accomplish this end, but the idea is supported.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jim Fridley, University of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.