

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 2717

As of February 22, 2012

Title: An act relating to creating innovations in higher education.

Brief Description: Creating innovations in higher education.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education Appropriations & Oversight (originally sponsored by Representatives Seaquist and Pollet).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/11/12, 70-25.

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/21/12.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

Background: A 2011 study of education levels compared to earnings and unemployment in the United States conducted by Georgetown University found that workers with higher levels of education have more opportunity to increase earnings and stay employed during recessions. The study estimated that by 2018 about two-thirds of all employment will require some college education or better.

Another state report, completed in January 2012, estimates gaps between the supply of educated individuals and the labor market demand forecast over a five-year period. The report, *A Skilled and Educated Workforce*, conducted jointly by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB), the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, estimated that, in order to meet labor market demand, Washington needs to increase the number of additional degrees and certificates per year between 2014 and 2019 as follows:

- 9,000 more mid-level associate degrees and certificates;
- 10,000 more bachelors degrees; and
- 9,000 graduate or professional level degrees.

Summary of Bill: Public four-year institutions of higher education are encouraged to work together to design innovative approaches to greatly increase the number of resident students working toward and gaining baccalaureate degrees or further updating or advancing their

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academic credentials. The institutions are directed to work with HECB or its successor agency, SBCTC, faculty, students, business, and other appropriate partners.

By August 1, 2012, the institutions must submit an interim report to the Governor and legislative committees that includes a survey of relevant institutional innovations. By December 1, 2012, a final report must be submitted that proposes a comprehensive plan for implementing further, system-wide innovations designed to rapidly and substantially increase baccalaureate-level educational attainment by Washington residents employed or seeking employment in high growth sectors. Additionally, the institutions are encouraged to include in the final report innovative methods for enabling students to gain credit for prior learning and innovative programs, such as bridge programs, to reduce duplicative coursework and decrease time to completion of degree.

SBCTC is encouraged to charter a consortium of volunteer community and technical colleges to design innovative approaches to rapidly and substantially increase the cost-effective delivery of developmental and remedial education. These innovations are to be piloted wherever possible. SBCTC is directed to work with HECB or its successor agency, faculty, students, business, and other appropriate partners.

By August 1, 2012, SBCTC must submit an interim report to the Governor and legislative committees that includes a survey of relevant college innovations. By December 1, 2012, a final report must be submitted with the Efficiency Study Report that proposes a comprehensive plan for implementing further, system-wide innovations designed to rapidly and substantially increase the cost-effectiveness of remedial and developmental education instruction. Additionally, SBCTC is encouraged to include in the final report innovative methods for enabling students to gain credit for prior learning and innovative programs, such as bridge programs, to reduce duplicative coursework and decrease time to completion of a degree.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 16, 2012.

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: Our state is radically undereducated. Twenty-five year olds are less educated than their parents. We are not going to buy an educational system that is needed in next few years. We need to buy innovation. On every single campus and building innovations are happening; community and technical colleges (CTCs) are remarkably entrepreneurial. At the university level, in addition to regular students, online students are continuing education as a profitable exercise. We are asking the two systems to tell us what is going on that is innovative before the next session and budget process, in order to launch serious reforms for higher education. There is not a lot of knowledge among campuses and faculty about what others are doing. Skill attainment is not static. Students with BAs may still need training to advance in their career. The bill has promise for helping students attain their first job. Entry-level positions are hard to fill because individuals can't

do basic math. We must meet the needs of employers throughout state. On the budget side, many students take the same class over and over, paying tuition over and over, and burning through valuable financial aid. Institutions could put resources to good use in other ways. We want to focus on comprehensive strategy and a system-wide coordination will address this issue.

OTHER: The requirements in the bill are already required in efficiency legislation. CTCs have already identified evidence-based best practices and are implementing teaching and learning models. Colleges and math departments are rethinking and transforming math. Colleges are working with local high schools on transcript placement. We already have a prior learning workgroup that is meeting and sharing best practices. These expectations are already included in previous reporting requirements and increases reporting requirements. The work will be done regardless of the bill. The bill has two reporting requirements that are a couple months apart. Could there just be a final report? Already collaborate with CTCs.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Seaquist, prime sponsor; Donna Steward, Assn. of WA Business; Jim Hills, Shoreline Community College; Paul Francis, Council of Presidents.

OTHER: Michelle Andreas, SBCTC.