
HOUSE BILL 2833

State of Washington 62nd Legislature 2012 1st Special Session
By Representative Hasegawa

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the legislative task force on
2 higher education reform; creating new sections; and providing an
3 expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

6 (a) The highest goals of Washington's educational system are: (i)
7 To support the personal development of each person to blossom to their
8 fullest capacity in whatever supportive role they choose to play in
9 society; and (ii) to support our collective development as a society of
10 thoughtful and productive citizens who can critically analyze social
11 problems and work collectively to advance society as a whole;

12 (b) Washington's postsecondary education system is one of the best
13 in the world with top apprenticeship programs, a top community and
14 technical college system, a top regional university system, and world
15 class research institutions;

16 (c) Washington's postsecondary education system has many
17 conflicting goals that it is structurally incapable of concurrently
18 meeting within the constraint of declining state revenues and state
19 support for the system. It must concurrently maintain the highest

1 quality postsecondary education system in the world, maintain
2 sufficient placement slots for anyone who wants to attend, maintain
3 affordability for anyone who wants to attend, increase degree
4 production, train workers to high levels in "high demand" fields,
5 maintain world class research capacity, and also achieve these goals
6 while declining revenues to the state force funding cuts;

7 (d) The many separate administrations among the regional and
8 research institutions lead to excessive administrative inefficiencies,
9 salaries, and overhead costs, as well as a lack of a comprehensive and
10 coordinated systemic approach to their governance;

11 (e) Washington's community and technical colleges are extremely
12 efficient at delivering a broad array of workforce training programs,
13 lower division college classes, and campus-based university centers,
14 which provide cost-efficient four-year degrees;

15 (f) Lower division classes at research universities are often
16 extremely large, with up to five hundred students in a class, and not
17 a good learning environment for students. In these circumstances,
18 lower division educational quality is sacrificed to subsidize upper
19 division and postgraduate operations; and

20 (g) It is time to consider a systemic restructuring to take best
21 advantage of our current postsecondary resources, and to align system
22 structures to achieve multiple goals of accessibility, affordability,
23 quality, efficiency of degree production, and creation of engaged
24 citizens.

25 (2) For these reasons, the legislature intends to create a
26 legislative task force on higher education reform for the purpose of
27 examining Washington's postsecondary education system, accounting for
28 available resources within the system, evaluating system goals,
29 evaluating system governance structures, and developing a comprehensive
30 recommendation to the legislature that best achieves system goals
31 simultaneously.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1)(a) A legislative task force on higher
33 education reform is established, with members as provided in this
34 subsection.

35 (i) The president of the senate shall appoint three voting members
36 of the task force from the senate, which shall include the chair and

1 the ranking member of the senate higher education and workforce
2 development committee.

3 (ii) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint
4 three voting members of the task force from the house of
5 representatives, which shall include the chair and the ranking member
6 of the house higher education committee.

7 (iii) The governor shall appoint five nonvoting members of the task
8 force, which shall represent the office of financial management, the
9 office of the superintendent of public instruction, the state board for
10 community and technical colleges, the office of student achievement,
11 and the workforce training and education coordinating board.

12 (b) The task force shall choose its cochairs from among its
13 legislative membership. The chair of the house higher education
14 committee and the chair of the senate higher education and workforce
15 development committee shall convene the initial meeting of the task
16 force.

17 (2) The task force shall examine the higher education delivery
18 system to maximize resources and maintain access and quality, and shall
19 review the following issues:

20 (a) Whether lower division courses subsidize upper division
21 courses;

22 (b) Whether undergraduate programs subsidize graduate programs and
23 research activities;

24 (c) Whether community and technical colleges should be the primary
25 or exclusive providers of some or all lower division courses;

26 (d) Whether regional universities and the state college should be
27 the primary or exclusive providers of some or all upper division
28 courses;

29 (e) Whether state research universities should be the primary or
30 exclusive providers of some or all graduate programs;

31 (f) Whether state research universities should be restructured into
32 separate undergraduate and postgraduate institutions;

33 (g) The circumstances in which any waivers of the structure
34 outlined in (c) through (f) of this subsection should be provided;

35 (h) The merits of modifying the governance of institutions of
36 higher education including, but not limited to, establishing steering
37 committees consisting of deans in place of boards of regents; and

- 1 (i) The efficiencies that may be gained from eliminating
2 duplicative programs.
- 3 (3) Staff support for the task force must be provided by the senate
4 committee services and the house of representatives office of program
5 research.
- 6 (4) Legislative members of the task force must be reimbursed for
7 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative
8 members, except those representing an employer or organization, are
9 entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW
10 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.
- 11 (5) The expenses of the task force must be paid jointly by the
12 senate and the house of representatives. Task force expenditures are
13 subject to approval by the senate facilities and operations committee
14 and the house of representatives executive rules committee, or their
15 successor committees.
- 16 (6) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to
17 the governor, the house higher education committee, and the senate
18 higher education and workforce development committee by December 1,
19 2012.
- 20 (7) This section expires January 1, 2013.

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