

HB 1795-S2.E - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Establishes the higher education opportunity act to: (1) Ensure that tuition dollars are spent to improve student access, affordability, and the quality of education;

(2) Establish a clear nexus between tuition dollars and improved productivity and greater accountability of public higher education institutions;

(3) Create a modern and robust higher education financial system that funds outcomes and results rather than input and process;

(4) Continue a commitment to public funding of higher education through state appropriations that are essential for providing access, affordability, and quality in higher education for all students across the state; and

(5) Set goals for four-year institutions of higher education to increase the number of students who earn baccalaureate degrees and achieve certain bachelor degree completion targets by 2018.

VETO MESSAGE ON E2SHB 1795

June 6, 2011

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to Sections 13 through 25, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1795 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to the higher education opportunity act."

Sections 13 and 14 exempt higher education from the requirements of competitive solicitation for personal services contracts and other purchases that are less than \$100,000. Current law requires competitive solicitation for personal service contract greater than \$20,000 and for other purchases greater than \$35,000. Section 15 exempts higher education from the requirement that no payments may be made in advance for equipment maintenance services to be performed in excess of one year. Other legislation requires a study and the establishment of a policy regarding these practices for all of state government, including higher education institutions.

Sections 16 through 24 exempt higher education from various spending freezes, such as hiring, personal service contracts,

equipment, out of state travel and training, and board member travel allowances that were imposed during the 2009-2011 biennium. These freezes expire on June 30, 2011. Due to the length of the regular legislative session and special session, sections 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 have no operative effect because the restrictions expire before the law takes effect.

Section 25 would exempt, through June 30, 2011, higher education institutions from prohibitions on wage and salary increases granted with non-state funds. These prohibitions on wage and salary increases are reinstated for the 2011-13 biennium in SB 5860 for all of state government. In addition, the underlying statute already provides an exemption for higher education to the wage and salary freeze if increases are needed for recruitment and retention purposes.

For these reason, I am vetoing Sections 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1795. Higher education institutions are still prohibited from granting wage and salary increases using tuition funding for the 2011-13 biennium, unless increases are necessary for recruitment and retention.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Sections 13 through 25 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1795.

With the exception of Sections 13 through 25, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1795 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Gregoire
Governor