

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1331

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to formation of student advisory committees at four-year institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Authorizing student advisory committees at institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Representatives Riccelli, Zeiger, Tarleton, Seaquist, Buys, Sawyer, Tharinger, Stonier, Bergquist, Lias, Upthegrove, Freeman, Farrell, Springer, Roberts, Jinkins, Maxwell, Fagan, Magendanz, Santos, Pollet, Fitzgibbon, Moscoso, Morrell, Fey and Dahlquist.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/30/13, 2/7/13 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Permits a student association at public baccalaureate to form a student advisory committee to advise the administration at that institution on issues that affect student access and success, such as tuition and fee levels.
- Requires administrators at higher education institutions to make information available to the student advisory committee and allow the committee to present recommendations.
- Requires the student advisory committee to solicit feedback from students and keep students informed of their meetings.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fagan, Hansen, Hargrove, Johnson, Magendanz, Pedersen, Reykdal, Riccelli, Sawyer, Scott, Sells, Smith, Tarleton and Wylie.

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

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.

Background:

State Statute permits student participation in higher education governance. For example:

- governing boards of The Evergreen State College, the state research universities and the state regional universities must consult with student associations regarding the impacts of potential tuition increases before changing tuition rates;
- the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges must consult with student associations regarding the impacts of potential tuition increases before changing tuition rates; and
- students must hold at least a majority of the voting memberships on the services and activities fee committee that proposes to the governing board program priorities and budget levels for programs derived from the services and activities fees.

Students may also serve as governing members of higher education institutions. One member of the board of regents or trustees at The Evergreen State College, the Washington research universities, and state regional universities is a student. Boards of trustees for each community college and technical college district may establish a sixth trustee filled by a student.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A recognized student government organization at each four-year higher education institution may form one student advisory committee (advisory committee). The purpose of this advisory committee is to advise and assist the administration on issues that directly affect student ability to access and succeed in educational programs. The issues that the advisory committee should consider include tuition and fee levels among other things.

The administration of the higher education institution must make available all nonconfidential information requested by the advisory committee and provide the committee an opportunity to present recommendations before final decisions are made.

The advisory committee must make efforts to solicit feedback from students and keep students informed of deliberations and actions of the advisory committee.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill specifies that one advisory committee may be formed at each four-year institution of higher education. The substitute bill replaces the term student association with the term recognized student government organization as the actor responsible for forming advisory committees. The substitute bill also indicates that if there is both an undergraduate and graduate recognized student government organization at one institution, members of the advisory committee may be appointed in a manner consistent with the policies of both organizations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Students are now consumers and investors, and as such, student involvement in the budget process is integral. Enshrining student participation in the governance process is wonderful. Students are paying more than ever, and student participation needs to keep pace with this. Many of the provisions in the bill are already in place, but it is important to preserve and legitimize these procedures.

(In support with amendment(s)) As drafted, we are concerned that every student association would be able to form a student advisory committee. The bill falls in place with how the institutions already operate. The institutions are happy to engage students in issues that affect them. The bill should be modified to specify that only one student advisory committee may be formed.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Riccelli, prime sponsor; Jackie Sperlich, Evan Smith, Tristan Hanon, and Angie Weiss, Washington Student Association; and Adam Sherman, Graduate Professional Student Senate at University of Washington.

(In support with amendment(s)) Chris Mulick, Washington State University; and Margaret Shepherd, University of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.