

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1544

As Passed House:
March 8, 2013

Title: An act relating to educational specialist degrees at regional universities.

Brief Description: Authorizing educational specialist degrees at Central Washington University and Western Washington University.

Sponsors: Representatives Lytton, Seaquist, Johnson, Smith, Sells, Ryu, Morrell, Roberts, Bergquist, Springer, Pollet and Santos.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/6/13, 2/13/13 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/8/13, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes Central Washington and Western Washington Universities to offer educational specialist degrees.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: 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).

Background:

As stated in statute, the primary purposes of the regional universities are to offer undergraduate and graduate programs through the master's degree. Statute further defines the specific types of degrees that these universities may provide. Statute authorizes bachelor's degrees in arts, science, and arts in education at the regional universities. It authorizes

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master's degrees in areas determined by the faculty and the boards of trustees to be appropriate for the granting of such degree.

In 2001 the Legislature authorized Eastern Washington University to offer applied, but not research, doctorate level degrees in physical therapy, subject to review.

An educational specialist degree (Ed.S) is an advanced degree designed to be between a master's degree and doctoral degree. Legislation passed in 2011 allows the board of trustees at Eastern Washington University to offer an Ed.S. The program at Eastern Washington University offers an Ed.S in school psychology.

Summary of Bill:

The boards of trustees of Central Washington and Western Washington Universities are allowed to offer educational specialist degrees.

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) This bill was passed unanimously last year; it allows Central Washington University and Western Washington University to offer educational specialist degrees (Ed.S). In 2011 the same legislation was passed unanimously for Eastern Washington University. The current emphasis in education is more focused on applied learning in a specialized area. There are no opportunities in regional areas for these educational programs. The school psychology program at Central Washington University is currently a three year master's program, which is longer than the requirement for an Ed.S.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Lytton, prime sponsor; Sherry Burkey, Western Washington University; and Steve DuPont, Central Washington University.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.