

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1736

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning higher education operating efficiencies.

Sponsors: Representatives Zeiger, Seaquist, Haler, Pollet, Ryu, Sawyer, Bergquist, Magendanz and Farrell.

House Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Background:

Reporting Requirements.

Similar to other state agencies, institutions of higher education are required to submit a variety of reports to the Governor, the Legislature, the Office of Financial Management, or other state agencies to demonstrate compliance with certain state laws or rules, or report progress toward certain state goals.

Electronic Signatures.

State agencies may use electronic signatures for certain operations. For example, legislation enacted in 2009 authorized the Department of Social and Health Services and the Health Care Authority to accept electronic signatures for all programs the agencies administer.

Authorization of Degree-Granting Institutions.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (Council) is responsible for authorizing degree-granting institutions to operate in the state. This mainly applies to out-of-state institutions that wish to advertise their programs in Washington to recruit students, operate a physical teaching site in Washington, or include an internship, an externship, clinical training, or a practical component that must take place in Washington. The following higher education institutions do not fall under the Council's authorization requirements: the state's public colleges and universities, longstanding private institutions, and higher education institutions whose degree programs are wholly religious in nature.

Student Participation in Higher Education Governance.

State law permits student participation in higher education governance. For example, governing boards of public baccalaureate institutions must consult with student associations regarding the impacts of potential tuition increases before changing tuition rates.

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.

Students may also serve as governing members of higher education institutions. One member of the board of regents or trustees at public baccalaureate institutions is a student. Boards of trustees for each community college and technical college district may establish a sixth trustee filled by a student.

Summary:

Reporting Requirements.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is directed to work with institutions of higher education, the Department of Enterprise Services, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Transportation to review the reporting requirements of institutions of higher education with the purpose of enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations. Reporting requirements specified relate to the following:

- state energy code building standards;
- high performance public buildings;
- motor vehicle transportation services;
- the Washington State Patrol retirement fund;
- air contaminants; and
- greenhouse gas emissions.

By December 1, 2014, the OFM must report to the Governor and the higher education committees of the Legislature with recommendations for coordinating and streamlining reporting and promoting the most efficient use of state resources at institutions of higher education.

Electronic Signatures.

Public institutions of higher education and state higher education agencies may use or accept electronic signatures for any human resource, benefits, or payroll processes that require a signature. For these purposes "electronic signature" is defined as an electronic sound, symbol, or process, attached to, or logically associated with, a contract or other record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record. "Secure electronic signature" is defined as an electronic signature that:

- is unique to the person making the signature;
- uses a technology or process to make the signature that is under the sole control of the person making the signature;
- uses a technology or process that can identify the person using the technology or process; and
- can be linked with an electronic record in such a way that has been changed since the electronic signature was incorporated in, attached to, or associated with the electronic record.

Authorization of Degree-Granting Institutions.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (Council) is authorized to negotiate and enter into interstate reciprocity agreements with other state or multistate entities regarding the operations of degree-granting institutions in the state. The Council may enter into agreements with degree-granting institutions based in Washington that are otherwise exempt from adhering to the minimum standards for degree-granting institutions set by the Council,

for the purposes of ensuring consistent consumer protection in interstate distance delivery of higher education.

Student Participation in Higher Education Governance.

A recognized student government organization at each public baccalaureate institution may form one student advisory committee with the purpose of advising and assisting the administration on issues that directly affect students' ability to access and succeed in educational programs. Issues that the advisory committee may consider include tuition and fee levels among others.

The administration of the higher education institution is required to make available all non-confidential information requested by the advisory committee and provide the committee an opportunity to present recommendations before final decisions are made. The advisory committee is required to make reasonable efforts to solicit feedback from students and keep student informed of deliberations and actions of the advisory committee.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	98	0	
Senate	47	0	(Senate amended)
House	92	3	(House concurred)

Effective: July 28, 2013