

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HCR 4403

As Passed House:
March 8, 2013

Brief Description: Concerning the workforce training and education coordinating board's high skills high wages plan.

Sponsors: Representatives Sells, Seaquist, Manweller, Haler, Moscoso, Hansen, Reykdal, Wylie, Santos, Hayes, Fagan, Condotta, Smith, Pollet, Maxwell, Ormsby, Ryu, Morrell, Parker and Riccelli; by request of Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Labor & Workforce Development: 2/12/13, 2/13/13 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/8/13, 91-6.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Approves the state comprehensive plan for workforce training, "High Skills, High Wages 2012-2022," submitted by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Sells, Chair; Reykdal, Vice Chair; Manweller, Ranking Minority Member; Condotta, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Green, Holy, Moeller, Ormsby and Short.

Staff: Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) was created in 1991 to provide planning, coordination, evaluation, monitoring, and policy analysis for the state workforce training system as a whole, and to advise the Governor and the Legislature concerning the training system.

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.

The Workforce Board is required to develop and maintain a 10-year state comprehensive plan for workforce training and education. The plan must establish goals, objectives, and priorities for the state training system.

Every four years, the Workforce Board must provide the Legislature and the Governor with an update of the state comprehensive plan. The Legislature, after public hearings, must approve or recommend changes to the plan and the updates by way of a concurrent resolution. Once approved, the plan becomes the state's workforce training policy unless legislation is enacted to alter the policies set forth in the plan.

The most recently updated plan, called "High Skills, High Wages 2012-2022," includes the following goals and objectives:

- improving career and education guidance for students;
- increasing workplace and life skills development;
- expanding programs of study for career-focused courses;
- increasing workplace experiences;
- addressing student retention;
- prioritizing job search and placement for people in first careers;
- increasing employer engagement with the system by improving outreach;
- promoting economic development and encouraging investing in strategic economic opportunities;
- expanding learning opportunities for workers at all stages of the education and career paths;
- improving the quality and speed of job matching and referrals;
- strengthening performance accountability by focusing on employment and earnings outcomes; and
- reducing barriers to sharing or splitting funding and establishing cost-sharing practices.

Summary of Bill:

The House of Representatives and the Senate, by way of concurrent resolution, approve the state comprehensive plan for workforce training and education.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The state plan recognizes the recession has been difficult because of its depth and duration. The plan calls for an "all hands on deck" approach. The Workforce Board developed this strategy based on many of the lessons learned. The first lesson learned is that the system is stronger when all parts of it come together. Previous state plans targeted specific populations; this plan provides for the entire system to focus on specific populations. The Workforce Board also learned that the system works best when business and labor are involved from the very beginning. People do better when they are trained in the system for jobs that are going to be there for them. There must also be a focus on the K-12 system. It is

very important for youth to understand that there are multiple pathways to success. The concept of multiple pathways is reflected throughout the state plan. It shows that career and technical colleges, apprenticeships, four-year universities, or direct entry into the workforce are all pathways to success. The Workforce Board plan also emphasizes the importance of on-the-job training. The plan reflects elements such as developing individual certification programs and creating flexibility through online learning. Multiple stakeholders, including the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, the Employment Security Department, and business and labor have been involved in creating this plan. The plan gives everyone a common focus.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Cindy Zehnder, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Jim Crabbe, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Ann Gorenson, Employment Security Department; Matt Canedy, Association of Washington Business; Lori Province, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.