
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 4416

State of Washington 63rd Legislature 2014 Regular Session

By Representatives Halpern, Pollet, Zeiger, Seaquist, and Gregerson

Read first time 03/03/14.

1 WHEREAS, Increasing educational attainment is vital to the well-
2 being of Washingtonians and critical to the health of the state's
3 economy; and

4 WHEREAS, Education opens doors to gainful employment, higher wages,
5 increased job benefits, improved physical health, and increased civic
6 engagement; and

7 WHEREAS, Educated workers who are capable of competing for high-
8 demand jobs in today's global economy sustain existing employers and
9 attract new businesses; and

10 WHEREAS, Individuals with competitive higher education credentials
11 directly contribute to the state's economic growth and vitality; and

12 WHEREAS, Workforce and labor market projections estimate that by
13 2020 the vast majority of jobs in Washington will require at least a
14 high school diploma or equivalent and seventy percent of those jobs
15 will also require some postsecondary education; and

16 WHEREAS, Current levels of educational attainment are inadequate to
17 address the educational needs of the state with eighty-nine percent of
18 Washington adults ages twenty-five to forty-four in possession of a
19 high school diploma or equivalent and less than fifty percent of

1 Washington adults ages twenty-five to forty-four with a postsecondary
2 credential; and

3 WHEREAS, Following the prolonged impact of a major economic
4 recession, the state's higher education system must now prepare to
5 expand degree and certificate programs to meet the state's needs; and

6 WHEREAS, A new strategy for achieving system growth, high quality,
7 and increased efficiency in higher education is needed to meet the
8 higher education attainment goals recommended by the student
9 achievement council; and

10 WHEREAS, Seventy-four percent of families in Washington have
11 incomes below the level considered able to afford the cost of attending
12 a community college, and seventy-eight to eighty-two percent of
13 families have incomes below the level considered able to afford one
14 student attending a regional university or research university,
15 respectively; and

16 WHEREAS, As the state reduced its support for institutions of
17 higher education, the cost of tuition has risen to be over twenty
18 percent of median household income for the state at its research
19 institutions, which is an obstacle to access; and

20 WHEREAS, It is vital for the student achievement council to adopt
21 a goal of what constitutes affordable tuition, recognizing that tuition
22 is often only half the cost of attending an institution of higher
23 education; and

24 WHEREAS, The primary mission of the student achievement council is
25 to propose to the governor and the legislature goals for increasing
26 educational attainment in Washington, including recommending the
27 resources necessary to achieve the goals and monitoring progress toward
28 meeting the goals; and

29 WHEREAS, A fundamental principle of the state is that the cost of
30 tuition, where an individual resides in the state, and economic,
31 racial, or other status of an individual, should not be a barrier for
32 any resident to obtain a postsecondary certificate or degree from an
33 institution of higher education; and

34 WHEREAS, The student achievement council recommends statewide
35 educational attainment goals required to meet the societal and economic
36 needs of the future in the higher education ten-year roadmap in RCW
37 28B.77.003 and 28B.77.020;

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the House of Representatives of
2 the state of Washington, the Senate concurring, That the following
3 statewide educational attainment goals are approved:

4 (1) All adults in Washington ages twenty-five to forty-four will
5 have a high school diploma or equivalent by 2023;

6 (2) At least seventy percent of Washington adults ages twenty-five
7 to forty-four will have a postsecondary credential by 2023; and

8 (3) The cost of tuition, where an individual resides in the state,
9 economic status, race or ethnicity, or other status of an individual,
10 shall not be a barrier for any resident to obtain a postsecondary
11 certificate or degree from an institution of higher education; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That by December 1, 2014, the student
13 achievement council is encouraged to develop and adopt strategies that
14 will enable the state to achieve each of the goals and report back to
15 the governor and the legislature with specific recommendations for
16 those strategies that require legislation or specific appropriations,
17 including timelines and benchmarks towards achieving each goal; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the council is encouraged to include
19 this information in the strategic action plan required in RCW
20 28B.77.020.

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