

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5487

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As of February 5, 2015

**Title:** An act relating to higher education programs at Washington State University and the University of Washington.

**Brief Description:** Concerning higher education programs at Washington State University and the University of Washington.

**Sponsors:** Senators Baumgartner, Billig, Rivers, Keiser, Schoesler, Hatfield, Angel, King, Lias, Mullet, Dandel, Ericksen, Warnick, Honeyford, Brown, Hasegawa, Hewitt and Chase.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education: 2/03/15.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Staff:** Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

**Background:** In 1917 the Washington State Legislature defined the term major line to mean the development of the work or courses of study in certain subjects, leading to a degree in that subject. The Legislature also designated major lines to be exclusively offered by either the University of Washington (UW) or the State College of Washington, later renamed the Washington State University (WSU), or to be shared by both UW and WSU.

Today, state law continues to stipulate that certain major lines of study may only be offered by the following universities:

- UW: law, medicine, forest products, logging engineering, library sciences, and fisheries.
- WSU: agriculture, veterinary medicine, and economic science in its application to agriculture and rural life.
- shared by both the UW and WSU: pharmacy, architecture, and forest management.

In 1946 the UW School of Medicine was founded. In the early 1970s, the UW created a regional medical education program which today serves Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho and is known as WWAMI. Universities from the five states partner with UW to offer basic sciences courses to first-year medical school students enrolled in WWAMI, including WSU.

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*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.*

**Summary of Bill:** The WSU Board of Regents is authorized and directed to establish, operate, and maintain a school of medicine. Medicine and forestry are added to the list of exclusive major lines that both UW and WSU must offer and teach. Medicine, forest products, and logging engineering are removed from UW's list of exclusive major lines.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This bill updates a hundred-year-old law that helped develop a world leader in medical education but has also restricted the number of doctors that Washington produces. The state has made significant investments in Spokane to build a medical campus. This bill leverages physical biomedical resources in Spokane. The WSU Board of Regents adopted a resolution to pursue medical education and remains committed as a WWAMI partner. WWAMI is a key part of medical education in this state. WSU will play a role in addressing a shortage of physicians. WSU has been training doctors for over 40 years as subcontractor of WWAMI. WSU has the infrastructure in place and it is not necessary to build a teaching hospital because of community-based partnerships. WSU plans to couple a strong admissions program with placement of students in communities around the state to lead to high retention rates. We need more slots for resident students. This provides opportunity for students aspiring to be doctors and want to study in their home state. Having additional medical schools in one state or city is not an issue. WSU has over 1000 nurses and medical partnerships throughout the state to address public health problems. The addition of medical students will make these relationships richer and more meaningful.

There are too few primary care physicians in the state. Over 85 percent of physicians are imported. We cannot find the doctors we need to serve the population. Support of additional medical students will build support for more residencies. It will bring more research dollars to Washington and produce more doctors. This proposal has sustained economic impact for both the region and state. Health care is the largest industry in Spokane, representing about one in four jobs. By 2030 the full build-out of the Spokane Riverpoint campus has a estimated regional economic impact of \$1.7 billion annually and \$2.1 billion for the state as a whole. It will generate employment for 10,000 eastern Washington residents and will exceed 13,000 for the state.

OTHER: Do not harm UW School of Medicine's 40-year commitment to eastern Washington. Do not erase the current support for 80 medical students who will be taught in Spokane this fall. Whether or not the state chooses to endorse and fund a second medical school in state is up to the Legislature. UW does not oppose the bill, the law is outdated. We have financial concerns. WSU assumes it will reprogram nearly \$6 million per year. Without these funds, the future of the WWAMI students in Spokane becomes very uncertain. As you consider this legislation, give WSU its own independent resources to move forward. We share a genuine desire to meet health care needs in Washington by better funding health professional loan repayments and medical residencies.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Baumgartner, prime sponsor; Senator Billig; Dr. Robert Sutton, Pacific NW University of Health Sciences; Candace Mumm, Spokane City Council; Jim Hedrick, Greater Spokane Incorporated; Mike Worthy, Ken Roberts, Patricia Butterfield, WSU; Hayley Hohman, Associated Students of WSU; Michael Patmas, Rockwood Clinic; Joe Wilczek, Franciscan Health System; Kim Pearman-Gillman, McKinstry, University District; Francisco R. Velazquez, M.D., S.M.

OTHER: Ian Goodhew, UW Medicine; Genesee Adkins, UW; Alex Bolton, Graduate and Professional Student Senate at UW, Vice President.