

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5909

As of February 18, 2015

Title: An act relating to increasing the health care workforce and increasing health care access across Washington state through expansion of undergraduate medical and dental education, graduate medical education, and health professional scholarship and loan repayment programming.

Brief Description: Concerning health care access and medical and dental education.

Sponsors: Senators Frockt, Becker, Pedersen, Habib and Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health Care: 2/19/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Staff: Evan Klein (786-7483)

Background: WWAMI Program. In 1946 the University of Washington (UW) School of Medicine was founded. In the early 1970s, 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 Washington State University (WSU).

Family Medicine. The Family Medicine Residency Network (FMRN) was established in 1975 to help train resident physicians in family medicine. The FMRN provides financial support to residents in programs affiliated with the UW School of Medicine and establishes positions for appropriate faculty to staff the programs. The dean of the UW School of Medicine is responsible to implement the development and expansion of residency programs in cooperation with the medical profession, hospitals, and clinics located throughout Washington.

The chair of the Department of Family Medicine at the UW School of Medicine determines where affiliated programs exist, giving consideration to communities in the state where the population, hospital facilities, number of physicians, and interest in medical education indicate the potential success of the residency program.

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 amount of state funding for a residency program is limited to no more than 50 percent of the total cost of the program. No more than 25 percent of the state funding may be used for faculty and staff at the UW School of Medicine associated with affiliated residency programs. No funds may be used to subsidize the costs of patient care.

Washington State Health Professional Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program. The Washington State Health Professional Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program (Program) was established in 1989. The Program is administered by the Washington Student Achievement Council in collaboration with the Department of Health. The Program offers two funding sources: the state-funded Health Professional Loan Repayment Program; and the federally match-funded U.S. Department of Health and Human Services State Loan Repayment Program.

Summary of Bill: All state operating funds and capital facilities provided to WSU for the operations of the five-state WWAMI program must be transferred to UW by July 1, 2015. Subject to this transfer, UW must maintain a medical student class size of at least 40 students per year in Spokane.

UW must increase the number of medical students at its medical school in Spokane from 40 students per year to 120 students per year as quickly as practicable, but no later than the 2021-22 academic year. UW must also increase the number of dental students at its dental program in Spokane from eight students per year to 30 students per year as quickly as practicable, but no later than the 2019-20 academic year. All of the students accepted by UW for these two expansions must be Washington residents. Classroom and lab space must be provided on the Riverpoint campus in Spokane to accommodate the class size expansions.

Subject to available state funding, the medical education system must allocate funds to new or expanded residency programs. The funds must be prioritized for the following programs:

- new and expanded residency programs in rural and underserved areas;
- conversion of existing osteopathic residency programs to new accreditation standards; and
- new and expanded residency programs that leverage additional non-state funding or maximize federal matching opportunities.

A family practice education advisory board is established, consisting of nine members with the dean of the UW School of Medicine serving as the chair. The other members include the following:

- the chair of the Department of Family Medicine at the UW School of Medicine;
- two public members appointed by the Governor;
- a member appointed by the Washington State Medical Association;
- a member appointed by the Washington State Academy of Family Physicians;
- a hospital administrator representing Washington hospitals with family practice residency programs;
- a director representing the directors of community-based family practice residency programs; and
- a member that is an osteopath.

The dean and chair of Department of Family Medicine are permanent members of the board. All other members are appointed for specified term limits.

The advisory board must advise the dean and chair of the Department of Family Medicine in the implementation of the education programs provided for in the bill, including the selection of the areas within the state where affiliate residency programs should exist, the allocation of funds, and the procedures for review of the residency programs.

The sum of \$4 million is appropriated to the Health Professional Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program Fund for both fiscal year 2016 and 2017.

Appropriation: \$8 million.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 16, 2015.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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