

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6218

As of January 26, 2016

Title: An act relating to the clean energy education program.

Brief Description: Creating the clean energy education program.

Sponsors: Senators Brown, Braun, Hewitt, Rivers, Roach and Sheldon.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/26/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Staff: Evan Klein (786-7483)

Background: Washington State University Extension Energy Program. In 1996, the Legislature transferred energy-education, applied-research, and technology-transfer programs from the State Energy Office to Washington State University (WSU). The WSU Extension Energy Program receives project funding from a variety of federal and nonprofit sources. The WSU Extension Energy Program maintains a staff of over 100 people working out of Olympia, Spokane, and other satellite locations. Clients of the WSU Energy Extension Program include schools and universities, industrial plants, private consulting firms, businesses, government agencies, professional and trade associations, and utilities.

The WSU Extension Energy Program currently maintains the following programs in support of their mission:

- building efficiency;
- resource conservation management;
- industrial efficiency;
- agricultural efficiency;
- renewable energy;
- technology development and evaluation;
- energy information; and
- workforce and economic development.

Summary of Bill: Clean Energy Education Program. The Clean Energy Program (Program) is established and will be administered by the director of the WSU Extension Energy Program (Director). In establishing the Program, the director must:

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- develop a series of workshops, open to voluntary participation by eligible students, that focus on clean energy technologies and present a diverse range of ideas;
- seek the advice and recommendations of individuals and organizations active in the field of energy technology;
- develop a process for including individuals active in the field of energy technology as voluntary participants in the workshops;
- develop a strategy for publicizing workshops created under this section to students and teachers;
- develop an application process for eligible students to participate; and
- report back to the Legislature by December 15th of each year workshops are offered.

Washington students in grades 9 through 12 are eligible for participation in the Program.

Clean Energy Education Program Account. A Program account is created in the custody of the state treasurer to receive all appropriations by the Legislature, gifts, grants, and donations for the Program. Expenditures may be made from the account for the purposes of the Program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 13, 2016.

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: We have over 20,000 unfilled STEM related jobs in Washington. This bill would educate kids in emerging technologies and other aspects of clean energy. Clean energy jobs start out at about \$80,000 a year and are great jobs for kids looking for employment. There are a lot of other existing programs regarding clean energy, so this program could be used as an umbrella to bring other programs under the WSU Extension Energy Program. Washington State is already one of the low-carbon energy leaders in the world. We are importing a lot of people to support clean energy industries, instead of teaching our own. This bill would go toward educating Washington students to enter the clean energy industry.

OTHER: The WSU Energy Extension Program has the expertise in-house to successfully perform the work in this bill.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Brown, Prime Sponsor; James Conca, Herbert M. Parker Foundation/Trustee.

OTHER: Sheila Riggs, Washington State University Energy Program.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.