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HOUSE BILL 1500

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Representatives Zeiger, Haler, Pollet, Manweller, Bergquist, Condotta, Magendanz, and McCaslin

Read first time 01/21/15. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to a study of higher education cost drivers;  
2 creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It is the intent of the legislature to  
5 order a cost driver study of the public four-year institutions of  
6 higher education, using the 2013 joint transportation cost driver  
7 study as a model. The legislature finds that students now pay over  
8 sixty percent of the cost of public four-year higher education. As  
9 families have been asked to pay more, it is essential that students,  
10 families, the taxpayers, our public institutions of higher education,  
11 and lawmakers continue to closely monitor the factors that contribute  
12 to the cost of a public four-year education in Washington. Following  
13 the passage in 2011 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No.  
14 1795, institutions have been diligent in bringing forward efficiency  
15 recommendations. The legislature intends to continue this good work  
16 by gaining a clearer understanding of what drives the cost of higher  
17 education.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The joint higher education committee  
19 in RCW 44.04.360 shall conduct a study of higher education costs at

1 the state universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen  
2 State College.

3 (2) In conducting the study, the joint higher education committee  
4 shall convene an advisory panel to provide study guidance, data, and  
5 recommendations. The advisory panel shall include the members of the  
6 joint higher education committee and a representative from each of  
7 the following groups: The office of financial management, the student  
8 achievement council, the council of presidents, the state auditor's  
9 office, the largest labor union at the regional universities as  
10 defined in RCW 28B.10.016, and the faculty of the state universities  
11 as defined in RCW 28B.10.016. The advisory panel shall meet four  
12 times.

13 (3)(a) The study must describe the cost drivers for each  
14 institution and the cost drivers for students over the most recent  
15 twenty-year period for which data is available, including the cost  
16 of:

- 17 (i) Research;
- 18 (ii) Faculty and staff salaries;
- 19 (iii) Administration;
- 20 (iv) Health care and benefits;
- 21 (v) Capital;
- 22 (vi) Student services;
- 23 (vii) Textbooks; and
- 24 (viii) Student housing.

25 (b) The study must also compare these cost drivers to the cost  
26 drivers for institutions and students in the global challenge states  
27 and other comparable states, where information is available.

28 (4) The joint higher education committee shall issue a report of  
29 its findings to the house of representatives and senate higher  
30 education committees by November 1, 2016.

31 (5) This section expires July 1, 2017.

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