
Higher Education Committee

SSB 6544

Brief Description: Establishing the future of work task force.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Chase, Brown, Hasegawa, Wagoner, Wellman, Takko and Conway).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes the Future of Work Task Force, supported by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, to address issues related to changes in technology, industry, and the workforce.

Hearing Date: 2/20/18

Staff: Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

The Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) is a Governor-appointed partnership of members from businesses, labor, and government. Among other things, the Workforce Board evaluates the performance of, and coordinates and monitors, the state's workforce programs as a whole.

In a 1999 Executive Order, the Governor directed the Workforce Board to work with business, labor, state agencies, and local workforce development councils to develop strategies addressing, among other things, the following challenges:

- closing the gap between employer need for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need;
- enabling workers to make smooth transitions so they may fully benefit from the new, changing economy.

Summary of Bill:

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 Future of Work Task Force (task force) is created to:

- inventory and assess trends and factors that are drivers of the transformation of industries and work;
- identify policies and practices to help the state's businesses, workers, and communities thrive economically while responding to changes in technology, workplace practices, and other issues;
- recommend mechanisms and structures for sustainable industry sector partnerships; and
- create a policy framework to support a talent development pipeline and lifelong learning structure that, among other things:
 - prepares young people to navigate careers and workplaces of the future;
 - helps workers keep up-to-date skills or helps retrain workers when needed;
 - enables attainment of credentials that are portable and transferable;
 - provides opportunities for instructional staff to keep pace with changes; and
 - allows collaborative research between business, instructional staff, and students.

The task force must consist of:

- two members from the House of Representatives (one appointed from each of the two major caucuses);
- two members from the Senate (one appointed from each of the two major caucuses); and
- six business representatives and six labor representatives, appointed by the Workforce Board.

The Workforce Board may contract with research advisors to carry out the duties of the task force. The task force may not meet more than four times per year.

The task force expires on June 30, 2020.

Under the direction of the task force and subject to amounts appropriated, the Workforce Board must:

- develop and maintain an inventory of current and future trends and factors that drive transformation of industries and work in the state over the next 25 years;
- research the best and promising practices from state, national, and international sources, and develop case examples;
- gather input from employers and workers from major industrial sectors in the state, using surveys and community forums and ensuring every region of the state is consulted;
- identify relevant metrics and recommend a possible dashboard for tracking success and addressing the future of work issues;
- consult with public and nonprofit organizations that support businesses or their workforce to identify barriers that hinder those organizations' ability to effectively support business and workforce development in a transformational environment;
- make initial recommendations and a research design report describing the plan and methods to be used by the task force by December 31, 2018; and
- report to the appropriate committees of the Legislature and the Governor on task force activities and recommendations by December 1, 2019.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.