

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1433

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, March 28, 2017

Title: An act relating to decoupling services and activities fees from tuition.

Brief Description: Decoupling services and activities fees from tuition.

Sponsors: House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Stambaugh, Orwall, Haler, Tarleton, Jinkins, Pollet, Stonier, Ryu, Hargrove, Santos and Doglio).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/06/17, 83-15.

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/16/17, 3/28/17 [DP-WM].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the provision tying the annual increase of student and activity fees to the percentage increase in student tuition fees for the four-year public institutions.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wilson, Chair; Bailey, Vice Chair; Palumbo, Ranking Minority Member; Frockt.

Staff: Clint McCarthy (786-7319)

Background: Services and activities (S&A) fees are used to fund student activities and programs. Governing boards at institutions of higher education may increase the S&A fee annually. The authorizing statute provides that the annual increase may not exceed the percentage increase of the annual percentage increase in student tuition fees for resident undergraduate students. The percentage increase does not apply to that portion of the S&A fees previously committed to the repayment of bonded debt. Those adjustments may exceed the fiscal growth factor. In the 2013-15 and 2015-17 fiscal biennia, the Legislature authorized governing boards to increase the S&A fees by amounts judged reasonable and

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necessary by the S&A fee committee and the governing board, as opposed to having the increase tied to tuition.

Each institution has an S&A fee committee, and students have a majority of the voting membership on the committee. Student groups and campus programs submit proposals to the S&A fee committee, which reviews the proposals and recommends how S&A fees should be allocated. The S&A fee committee recommends a final budget to the institution's governing board, which is required to give priority consideration to the committee's recommendations.

Summary of Bill: The provision limiting the annual increase of S&A fees to the percentage increase in student tuition fees is removed for the four-year public institutions, and instead, S&A fees may be increased by amounts judged reasonable and necessary by the S&A fee committee and the governing board.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There are stop gaps to make sure that fees are vetted before escalating beyond what an increase to tuition would be. Students want to determine what resources they need to provide the resources necessary for the students. This will definitely be necessary to offset increases to the minimum wage. Eighty-five percent of these fees go towards staff at Evergreen. Trust students with fiduciary stewardship.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Emily Christianson, Evergreen S&A Board; Michael Scott, Associated Students of Central Washington University.

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