

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6262

As of January 22, 2018

Title: An act relating to establishing pilot programs to plan for the needs of certain college students experiencing homelessness.

Brief Description: Establishing pilot programs to plan for the needs of certain college students experiencing homelessness.

Sponsors: Senators Ranker, Palumbo, Darneille, Liias, Kuderer, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser and Saldaña.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/18/18.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates pilot programs at certain four-year and two-year colleges and universities to plan for and accommodate homeless students.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Kellee Gunn (786-7429)

Background: Public Baccalaureate Institutions. There are six public four-year colleges and universities in Washington State. Of the six four-year institutions, four are regional comprehensive colleges and universities: The Evergreen State College, Western Washington University, Central Washington University, and Eastern Washington University. The other two, University of Washington and Washington State University, are research institutions.

Public and Community Technical Colleges. There are 34 public and community technical colleges in Washington State. Each public and community technical college must maintain an open-door policy, which states that admission cannot be denied because of the location of a student's residence or because of the student's educational background or ability.

Summary of Bill: A pilot program is established to encourage colleges and universities to plan for the unique needs of students experiencing homelessness. Pilot programs are

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established at two four-year institutions—one on each side of the Cascade mountain range, and four college districts—two on each side of the Cascade mountain range. Accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- laundry facilities;
- storage;
- showers;
- encouraging culinary programs to provide free or reduced-price meals; and
- providing short-term housing or housing assistance; and plans to develop surplus property for affordable housing to accommodate the needs of students experiencing homelessness

Pilot programs would end on July 1, 2023. A report from the two-year and four-year institutions would be due December 1, 2023.

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: Homeless students on college campuses are dealing with simple issues such as being able to take a shower and store their possessions. Institutions already have lockers and showers. Lets make sure students are not stopped from continuing their education because of these issues.

There are significant investments being made regarding homelessness, but not in postsecondary institutions. This helps align efforts in high school and elsewhere at the college-level. Providing wraparound services, and looking at ways to help homeless students is a great thing we need to do. The bill can be made better by adding case-managers and stipends for clothing and technology. These pilot programs are important to our shared statewide mission to move people out of poverty and into living wage jobs. Please include appropriations for this work equal to the outcomes you would like to see.

The thinking behind this bill is good. Another approach to this important issue is to have an interim workgroup to examine best practices, compare notes, and move forward on implementation timelines.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Kevin Ranker, Prime Sponsor; Katara Jordan, Building Changes; Erin Frasier, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Charles Adkins, Director of Legislative Affairs, Geoduck Student Union at the Evergreen State College; Becca Kenna-Schenk, Western Washington University.

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