

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5738

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Higher Education & Workforce Development, February 19, 2019

Title: An act relating to requiring postsecondary institutions to plan for the needs of certain students experiencing homelessness.

Brief Description: Requiring postsecondary institutions to plan for the needs of certain students experiencing homelessness.

Sponsors: Senators Darneille, Nguyen and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/07/19, 2/19/19 [DP-WM, DNP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires each community and technical college district and public baccalaureate to develop a capital project plan to renovate or rehabilitate an existing building or facility for the purpose of providing certain accommodations for homeless students.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Palumbo, Chair; Randall, Vice Chair; Lias and Wellman.

Minority Report: Do not pass.
Signed by Senators Holy, Ranking Member; Brown and Ericksen.

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 including The Evergreen State College, Western Washington University, Central Washington University, and Eastern Washington University.

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 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.

Capital Budget. The capital budget is one of three budgets developed and enacted by the Legislature annually. The capital budget pays for construction and renovation of state facilities, including public schools, prisons, state hospitals, higher education institutions, and parks. Revenues to support capital spending come primarily from bonds and dedicated cash accounts. Every year state agencies submit requests to the Office of Financial Management and the Legislature to include certain projects in the capital budget.

Summary of Bill: Each community and technical college district and public baccalaureate must develop a capital project plan by July 1, 2021, to address the unique needs and challenges of students experiencing homelessness. The plan must include renovation or rehabilitation of an existing building or facility within the institution to provide certain accommodations including:

- laundry facilities;
- storage units;
- showers; and
- lockers.

Any renovation and rehabilitation project listed in the capital project plan must be completed by July 1, 2023. If the college district or public baccalaureate implements a culinary program, it is encouraged to provide free or reduced-price meals to reduce food insecurity.

Each college district and public baccalaureate must also attempt to engage with the local housing authority to provide tenant-based rental assistance programs, including programs to assist students recently released from a state correctional facility or local jail.

Homelessness is defined as without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as set forth in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 2019.

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: Working with the local housing authority is a good strategy and has worked at the University of Washington-Tacoma. This is an effective method, especially with campuses that have limited housing. As a high school student who was homeless, I was able to use the counselors and other resources available in K-12. Those

same resources are not available in the colleges. This act makes huge steps to help students experiencing homelessness.

OTHER: There are a lot of question marks with this bill. This program should collect data on these students. There is no way to currently track students experiencing homelessness. Many of the students who use the food pantry are experiencing homelessness, and that is the only way for the school to understand the number of students who need resources. Colleges are resource strapped and this bill will have a negative fiscal impact. This bill is too prescriptive. If this goes forward, it should consider including tiny house villages.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Adán Espino Jr, Associated Students of the University of Washington Tacoma.

OTHER: Arlen Harris, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges; Dr. Timothy Stokes, President, South Sound Community College; Dani Trimble, Lower Columbia Community College; Cody Eccles, Council of Presidents.

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