

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1119

As of April 1, 2021

Title: An act relating to notifying students of courses with low-cost instructional materials and open educational resources at the four-year institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Notifying students of courses with low-cost instructional materials and open educational resources at the four-year institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Representatives Jacobsen, Simmons, Young, Graham, Pollet, Leavitt, Dolan and Rule.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/12/21, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 3/11/21, 3/18/21 [DPA-WM].

Ways & Means: 4/01/21.

Brief Summary of Amended Bill

- Requires public four-year higher education institutions to designate during registration the courses where the materials are \$50 or less.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Randall, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Holy, Ranking Member; Liias.

Staff: Alicia Kinne-Clawson (786-7407)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Michele Alishahi (786-7433)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background: In 2009, the United States Congress passed the Higher Education Opportunity Act which included provisions related to students choice and knowledge about textbooks. Under the law, institutions of higher education are required to provide lists of assigned textbooks for each course during the registration process.

Washington State law requires affiliated college and university bookstores to disclose information on required course materials at least four weeks prior to the start of the class for which the materials are required. Course material information includes title, author or authors, edition, price, and ISBN. In 2020, the Legislature required the community and technical colleges to designate on their online course registrations the courses in which the materials cost \$50 or less.

Summary of Amended Bill: The public four-year institutions of higher education must indicate to students during registration whether a course uses open educational resources or low-cost required instructional materials. A course uses low-cost instructional materials if the entire cost of the required materials equals \$50 or less. If the material costs are not available at the time of registration due to an unassigned faculty member, the cost of the materials must be provided as soon as is feasible.

The institutions of higher education are required to adjust the dollar value of low-cost course materials by inflation at least once every five years.

EFFECT OF HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AMENDMENT(S):

- Requires the institutions of higher education to adjust the dollar value of low-cost course materials by inflation at least once every five years.

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 on House Bill (Higher Education & Workforce Development): *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This is a bill to disclose if there are low cost or open source textbooks available for students. I worked as an adjunct professor and most of the materials I used were open source materials. This bill is important to support because for many students paying for tuition is already a huge expense. This bill would help give students information to better prepare themselves for the costs associated with their courses. Without this required notice many students would not be aware that this material is available to them.

Lining the shelves of my shelves on campus are dozens are examination copies of textbooks sent by publishers. The price of these books may range from \$100 to \$400 for the same class. This bill would encourage my colleagues to remember that the materials they choose should serve the interests of our students and not the publishers.

Persons Testifying (Higher Education & Workforce Development): PRO: Representative Cyndy Jacobsen, Prime Sponsor; Sophie Parker, The Washington Student Association; Jacob Vigdor, University of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Higher Education & Workforce Development): No one.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on the Bill as Amended by Higher Education & Workforce Development (Ways & Means): PRO: For many students, tuition is a huge expense. Course materials are an additional cost. This bill would reduce the stress students face and provide them with information to better prepare themselves for costs. The four-week advance notice also provides adequate time for students to find materials that are adequate for them. Without this bill, many students would not know that this material is available for them.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Sophie Parker, The Washington Student Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Ways & Means): No one.