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**Higher Education Committee**

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**HB 1880**

**Brief Description:** Creating the skills-based economic growth program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Wallace, Anderson, Ormsby, Buri, Curtis, Haigh, Priest, Armstrong, Jarrett, Roberts, Kenney, Conway, Morrell and Wood.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates the pilot skills-based economic growth planning program.
- Authorizes three Workforce Development Councils to serve as the lead regional workforce development planning agencies for the purposes of the pilot.

**Hearing Date:** 2/7/07

**Staff:** Jennifer Thornton (786-7111).

**Background:**

Congress passed into law the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 (PL 105-220) to prepare youth, dislocated workers, and adults for entry into the labor force, and to provide for the planning, implementation, and ongoing oversight of a comprehensive state workforce development system designed to improve workforce training, employment, literacy and vocational rehabilitation.

Executive Order 99-02 established the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) as the state Workforce Investment Board for the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The same executive order created 12 local Workforce Development Councils (WDCs), based on the workforce investment areas configured under WIA's predecessor, the Job Training Partnership Act. The primary responsibilities of WDCs include:

- providing input to the WTECB in the development of the state unified workforce plan;
- developing a local unified strategic workforce plan in partnership with local elected officials;
- oversight of the state WorkSource System;

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- promoting the coordination of workforce development activities at the local level and ensuring a link with local economic development strategies;
- providing a coordinated and responsive system of outreach to employers;
- identifying eligible training providers for WIA Title I; and
- negotiating local WIA performance measures.

Each WDC has a board of directors in which business representatives must constitute at least 51 percent of the membership. Other required members include labor, education, economic development agencies and community based organizations. Additional membership depends on whether the WDC was a newly formed council, or grandfathered in from a pre-existing council.

**Summary of Bill:**

The legislature authorizes a pilot program under which three local WDCs are selected by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) to serve as the lead regional workforce development planning organizations within their regions. At least one WDC must be located in eastern Washington. Each pilot program will receive funding to cover the cost of one full-time equivalent planner position including benefits. Each WDC selected will:

- convene workforce and economic development-related organizations and educational institutions that provide services within its region; and
- adopt and periodically update a consensus skills-based economic growth plan for the region that includes:
  - (1) data on current and projected employment opportunities in the local area;
  - (2) identification of workforce investment needs of businesses;
  - (3) identification of the needs of jobseekers and workers in the local area;
  - (4) analysis of the industry demand, potential labor force supply, and educational, employment, and workforce support available to businesses and jobseekers in the region;
  - (5) development of industry cluster-based strategies;
  - (6) identification of the needs of those clusters;
  - (7) recommendations for the most efficient use of existing workforce infrastructure and funding to maximize service to individuals and industry; and
  - (8) creation of a financial plan demonstrating how the regional workforce plan can be implemented.

The skills-based economic growth plans must be adopted within each pilot's region by November 30, 2008, and approved by the WTECB by February 15, 2009.

The pilots will collect data and produce a report showing the amount of new funding brought into the community as a result of the skills-based economic growth planning process; training capacity expansion achieved in programs targeted by the plan; impact on local economic growth; and the impact on career opportunities for local residents.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Preliminary fiscal note available.

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