

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2300

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to college textbooks.

Brief Description: Concerning college textbooks.

Sponsors: Representatives Hasegawa, Jarrett, Wallace, B. Sullivan, Kenney, Hunter, Goodman, Dunshee, Chase, Ormsby, Kelley, Simpson and Blake.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/27/07 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires publishers of college textbooks to inform faculty members of the price of products and any revisions made to the products.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Wallace, Chair; Sells, Vice Chair; Anderson, Ranking Minority Member; Buri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hasegawa, McIntire, Roberts and Sommers.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Jarrett.

Staff: Jennifer Thornton (786-7111).

Background:

Legislation enacted in 2006, required the governing boards of the state universities, the regional universities, and The Evergreen State College to work with affiliated bookstores, students, and faculty representatives to adopt rules requiring that affiliated bookstores:

- provide students the option of purchasing unbundled materials when possible;
- disclose the costs of the materials;
- disclose how new editions vary from previous editions; and

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- actively promote and publicize book buy-back programs.

The legislation also required the boards to adopt rules requiring faculty and staff members to consider the least costly practices in assigning course materials when educational content is comparable.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

When presenting marketing materials to a faculty member of an institution of higher education, college textbook publishers must disclose the intended price of their products at the bookstore run by or in a contractual relationship with that institution. The publisher must also disclose the history of revisions to the products.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The price the publisher will make the materials available at in the on-campus bookstore is expanded to also include the price of the materials at a bookstore run in a contractual relationship with an institution of higher education.

The option that the price be disclosed upon request of the faculty member is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Textbooks are a significant cost for students. The cost of textbooks has risen faster than inflation and tuition. Faculty understand the burden faced by students and parents, and are sympathetic. They support efforts to reduce costs as long as they don't compromise their ability to select the best material. It is hard for faculty to find out the cost of a book from the publisher's representative. This bill is a good follow-up to last year's unbundling legislation, as it will provide a tool that faculty can use.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Hasegawa, prime sponsor; Bryce McKibban, Associated Students of the University of Washington; and Sara Singleton, Council of Faculty Representatives.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.