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HOUSE BILL 1110

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State of Washington                      60th Legislature                      2007 Regular Session

By Representatives Morris, Hudgins, B. Sullivan, Morrell and Wallace

Read first time 01/10/2007. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to creating the Washington institute of technology;  
2 and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that Washington is a  
5 leading technology state. The legislature recognizes that during the  
6 past three decades Washington has experienced rapid growth in  
7 technology-based industries, compared to overall economic activity, and  
8 that the concentration of technology-based industries in the state is  
9 significantly higher than the national average. Technology-based  
10 industries in Washington account for one of the largest shares of  
11 employment, labor income, and business activity of any major sector in  
12 the Washington state economy.

13            However, despite Washington's leading position in the technology  
14 field, the legislature has concerns that other states and other  
15 countries are outpacing Washington state in enrolling and graduating  
16 qualified engineers and others in technology fields. While Washington  
17 is ranked as having one of the most highly educated populations in the  
18 country, it is ranked in the bottom quartile in the country in terms of  
19 production of bachelor's degrees. Additionally, of public bachelor's

1 degrees awarded in 2005, only five percent were in engineering and  
2 related technologies and only two percent were in computer and  
3 information science.

4 In order for Washington to continue to be a leading technology  
5 state, and to compete in a global, technology-driven economy,  
6 Washington needs a more robust higher education system that places a  
7 priority on enrolling and conferring undergraduate and graduate degrees  
8 upon students in science and technology, particularly in the fields of  
9 engineering, technology, biotechnology, science, computer science, and  
10 mathematics. The legislature recognizes that it must increase access,  
11 enrollment slots, and degree opportunities in those fields of study as  
12 they are integrally linked to ensuring that Washington state's economy  
13 can compete nationally and globally.

14 Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to create a center  
15 of excellence in this state, dedicated to technology, to be known as  
16 the Washington institute of technology. This institute of technology  
17 shall combine three world-class, university branch campuses:  
18 University of Washington - Bothell; Washington State University -  
19 TriCities; and Washington State University - Vancouver, and shall offer  
20 areas of study including, but not limited to, engineering, technology,  
21 biotechnology, science, computer science, and mathematics. The  
22 institute shall have a single board of regents and will be centrally  
23 administered. The board of regents will include representation from  
24 various technology-related organizations across the state.

25 The mission of the Washington institute of technology is to deliver  
26 world-class education in technology, science, and related fields, to  
27 prepare students to become leaders in the technology-dependent economy  
28 of the twenty-first century. Through rigorous academic study at the  
29 undergraduate and graduate level, and the excitement of discovery  
30 through research, the institute will play a critical role in shaping  
31 Washington's future. As a major public technological institute, it  
32 will create, share, and apply knowledge to promote student growth,  
33 advance community development, increase economic competitiveness, and  
34 improve the quality of life.

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