

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1395

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Clarifying terms for workforce and economic development.

Sponsors: Representatives Wallace, Anderson, Hasegawa, Sells, Chase and Kenney; by request of Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

House Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development

Background:

The term "high demand" has been widely used in recent years and has been interpreted in different ways creating confusion among stakeholders. To address this issue, the Governor's office convened a workgroup of agencies to develop common definitions that were completed in 2007. The workgroup included: the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board); the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC); the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development; the Employment Security Department; the Department of Labor and Industries; the Higher Education Coordinating Board; and the Council of Presidents.

The common definitions for terms related to "high demand" identified by the workgroup are listed below.

High Employer Demand Program of Study: Undergraduate or graduate certificate, apprenticeship or degree program in which the number of students prepared for employment per year (from in-state institutions) is substantially less than the number of projected job openings per year in that field — statewide, or in a sub-state region.

High Demand Occupation: An occupation with a substantial number of current or projected employment opportunities.

High Student Demand Program of Study: Undergraduate or graduate certificate or degree program, or apprenticeship, in which student demand substantially exceeds program capacity.

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 Workforce Board worked with the workgroup to review statutes to identify areas in need of clarification.

Summary:

Workforce and economic development terms are clarified and made consistent by:

- replacing "high demand field" with "high demand occupation" in statute for WorkFirst "work activity;"
- providing a statutory definition of "high employer demand program of study" in the statute pertaining to the Opportunity Grant program under the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges;
- replacing "high demand programs" with "high employer demand programs of study" in the state statute pertaining to the pilot program to improve services to customers of vocational rehabilitation under the Department of Labor and Industries; and
- inserting a common definition for "high demand occupation" in the statute pertaining to the training benefits program.

Certain activities, including the identification of high employer demand programs of study, must be done by SBCTC, labor and business, and the Workforce Board specifically for the purpose of identifying opportunity grant-eligible programs of study and other job training programs.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	95	0	
Senate	47	0	(Senate amended)
House	91	0	(House concurred)

Effective: July 26, 2009