

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2751

As of February 22, 2010

Title: An act relating to including a member from labor on community college boards of trustees.

Brief Description: Requiring that at least one member on each community college board of trustees be from labor.

Sponsors: Representatives Sells, Kenney, Nelson, Green, Ormsby, Conway, Campbell, Hasegawa, Seaquist, Simpson, Williams, Cody, Hudgins, Sullivan, Carlyle, Miloscia, Morrell, Hunt, Morris and Chase.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/10, 52-37.

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/19/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Washington is divided into 30 community and technical college districts. Each district has a Board of Trustees (Board) composed of five trustees appointed by the Governor. In making appointments to the Boards, the Governor gives consideration to geographical diversity and representation by labor, business, women, and racial and ethnic minorities. The Boards for districts containing a technical college must include at least one member from business and one member from labor. Within Washington there are five technical colleges: Lake Washington Vocational-Technical Institute, Renton Vocational-Technical Institute, Bates Vocational-Technical Institute, Clover Park Vocational Institute, and Bellingham Vocational-Technical Institute.

Trustees serve five-year terms. No trustee may be an employee of the community or technical college system, a member of the board of directors of any school district, or a member of the governing board of any public or private educational institution.

Summary of Bill: Every college district Board must include at least one member from labor. This requirement commences with the first appointment in each college district occurring after the effective date.

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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The community colleges produce the majority of degrees used by people to get jobs in the trades. Labor will add another perspective to board discussions and decisions. The boards already have broad representation from the business community. All board members must understand their roles as representatives of the state. This would bring community college boards in line with the technical colleges that already have labor representation on their boards. The labor movement is the primary user of the community and technical college system. All of the faculty and staff at community colleges are unionized. Labor is part of the community.

CON: There is nothing that prevents the appointment of labor members on these boards now. There is no compelling reason to specifically designate a labor representative. Trustees do understand labor and bargaining issues. Union employees working for a community college could not serve on community college boards, so many of the arguments for a designated labor representative are not valid. We do not need to limit the governors choices by having a designated seat.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Sells, prime sponsor; Pam Corl, Jeff Johnson, Washington State Labor Council; Sandra Schroeder, WFT Washington.

CON: Debra Lisser, Trustee Association, Skagit Valley College; Pete Crane, Olympic College.