

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5237

As Passed Senate, February 16, 2010

Title: An act relating to an accelerated baccalaureate degree program.

Brief Description: Requiring the development of three-year baccalaureate programs.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Shin, Kilmer, Berkey, Kastama, Sheldon, Hobbs, Kauffman, Schoesler, Franklin and Fraser).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/29/10, 2/02/10
[DPS, DNP, w/oRec].

Passed Senate: 2/16/10, 36-11.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5237 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Kilmer, Chair; Kastama, Vice Chair; Jacobsen, McAuliffe, Shin and Tom.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Becker, Ranking Minority Member; Stevens.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Hewitt and Pflug.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: A number of public and private universities offer three-year baccalaureate programs in selected subjects for students that have demonstrated academic abilities. The requirements of these accelerated baccalaureate programs vary. Some typical programmatic requirements include summer school attendance; prior college coursework taken during high school; or enrollment for the maximum credits allowed per quarter. All of these programs require careful planning. Some universities allow students to have their first year course work removed from their graduation requirements. A characteristic of these programs is a requirement that the participating students have high academic achievement such as either a

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high cumulative high school grade point average or high scores on either the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing Program (ACT).

Summary of Substitute Bill: State universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College (institutions) may develop accelerated baccalaureate degree programs that will allow academically qualified students to obtain a baccalaureate degree in three years without attending summer classes or enrolling in more than a full-time class load during the regular academic year. The institutions report on their plans for the accelerated baccalaureate degree programs to the Higher Education Coordinating Board for approval.

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: Students can rise to meet the challenge of completing their degrees in four years, and they should be given the opportunity to do so. This will help talented students advance quicker and enter the job market. Students will have to work hard to accomplish this and some of them are capable of doing so. Some students do this now, but it would be good to have a formal program.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Shin, prime sponsor; Mike Reilly, Council of Presidents; John McKean, Washington Student Association.