

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5376

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As of February 19, 2009

**Title:** An act relating to encouraging training for medical students, nurses, and medical technicians and assistants to work with adult patients with developmental disabilities.

**Brief Description:** Requiring the higher education coordinating board to develop a grant program to encourage training for students studying in the medical field to work with individuals with disabilities.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kauffman, Delvin, Shin, Haugen, Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe and Kline.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/18/09.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Staff:** Wendy Malkin (786-7434)

**Background:** The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) is a citizen board that administers the state's student financial aid programs and provides strategic planning, coordination, monitoring, and policy analysis for higher education in Washington.

Washington has about nine baccalaureate nursing programs and about twenty associate degree nursing programs. In addition, the University of Washington (UW) School of Medicine provides publicly supported medical education to students studying and training to become medical doctors. The UW School of Medicine is responsible for the design, implementation, and evaluation of its curriculum.

Some research suggests that people with developmental disabilities have difficulty accessing health care that meets their unique needs. For example, recent reports from the Surgeon General found a need to increase training among health care professionals to address the unique needs of individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities.

**Summary of Bill:** The bill as referred to committee not considered.

**Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute):** Subject to the appropriation of funds, the HECB must develop a grant program for institutions to design training projects focused on the

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improvement of services to adult individuals with developmental disabilities. Students at the UW Medical School and nursing schools, and special and technical care students at technical colleges could benefit from the increased training. The HECB may administer the grant program in consultation with the Department of Health. The HECB must report to the appropriate legislative committees by December 1, 2010. The report must include information on awarded grants and progress in developing improved training.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**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: This bill is the result of a year of work. Previous training programs for dentists and dental hygienists was helpful. We need this training for health professionals. Persons with developmental disabilities have different cognitive and emotional needs, and providers need the training to be sensitive to these needs. Community and technical colleges are a major trainer of health professionals in Washington, and community and technical colleges would like to be specifically included in the bill. Health care for individuals with developmental disabilities has been neglected. These individuals often end up in the emergency room because they do not know how to care for themselves. There has been training in pediatrics for working with children with developmental disabilities, but adults have been left out.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Kauffman, prime sponsor; Stan Flemming, Pacific NW University of Health Sciences; Pat Ward, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Rick Jensen, Action DD.