HOUSE BILL REPORT
HB 2368

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

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 Seaquist, Hasegawa, Probst, Hunt, McCoy, Sells, Appleton, Moscoso, Maxwell, Kenney, Reykdal, Fitzgibbon, Ormsby, Finn, Lytton, Upthegrove, Dickerson, Moeller, Hudgins, Ladenburg, Darneille, Kagi and Tharinger.

Brief History:
Committee Activity:
Higher Education: 1/18/12, 1/26/12 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires that the boards of trustees for all community college districts include at least one member from labor.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Carlyle, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Asay, Hasegawa, Pollet, Probst, Reykdal and Sells.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Parker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Crouse, Fagan, Warnick and Zeiger.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134).

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.

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.

Each board member must be a resident and qualified elector of the district. A board member may not be an employee of the community and technical college system, a board member of another school district, or a board member of another public or private educational institution. In appointing board members, the Governor must consider geographical diversity and representation by labor, business, women, and racial and ethnic minorities.

Each board for a district containing a technical college must include at least one member from business and one member from labor. Within Washington there are five technical colleges: Bates Technical College, Bellingham Technical College, Clover Park Technical College, Lake Washington Institute of Technology, and Renton Technical College.

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Summary of Bill:

The boards of trustees for all community college districts must include at least one member from labor. This requirement commences with the first appointment in each college district occurring after the effective date.

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Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It has been beneficial to board discussions to have someone with a labor background present. It gives the board access to a different perspective as well as an understanding of the labor community. This perspective is helpful when addressing the concerns of faculty unions, and also when dealing with issues related to workforce development. The views of folks with their "boots on the ground" often varies from the view from the top.

The Workforce Investment Act requires that there be a labor person on the advisory boards for professional and technical programs. State law requires that there be a labor representative on the boards of the five technical colleges. This practice has been good for the technical colleges, and should be extended to the community colleges.

It is great to have the labor community vested in the higher education system. They are very energetic advocates. They are ready and willing to serve on these boards.

A board member from labor is a board member with a labor perspective, not a labor trustee. He or she represents the entire community.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Bob Guenther, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 77; and Alia Griffing, Washington Federation of State Employees.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.