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## Higher Education Committee

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### 2SSB 5636

**Brief Description:** Concerning the University Center of North Puget Sound.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Harper, Shin and Delvin).

#### Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Assigns management and leadership for baccalaureate and graduate degree production at the University Center at Everett Community College to the Washington State University by July 1, 2014.
- Establishes a Coordinating and Planning Council to create a long range strategic plan and facilitate collaborations.
- Specifies that the plan must build on baccalaureate programs already offered at the University Center and be completed by July 1, 2013.
- Requires that the act take effect only after the Higher Education Coordinating Board conducts a needs and viability assessment and recommends implementation.

**Hearing Date:** 3/16/11

**Staff:** Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

#### **Background:**

Research by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) has found that certain regions in the state do not have adequate access to upper division baccalaureate education or graduate degrees. Access to higher education in north King, Snohomish, Island, and Skagit counties has been the subject of many studies since 1988. In 1989 the Legislature established the University of Washington, Bothell (UWB) campus.

In 2005 Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1794, directed Everett Community College, in collaboration with community and business leaders, other higher education institutions, and the

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HECB, to develop an educational plan for the region based on the university center model. The group was directed to submit a plan to the Legislature in December 2005, and the HECB was directed to provide a progress report in 2008.

The HECB 2008 report found that the three-county area is large, geographically diverse, and forecast to experience continued significant population growth to 2025 and beyond. The report forecast an unmet need for over 10,700 full-time equivalent students in 2025, without increased higher education service delivery. The HECB found that young adults aged 17 to 24 years make up 74 percent of the need. Based on employer interviews, the report found that there were needs for engineering and engineering technology program offerings in addition to a variety of other high demand programs of study.

In April 2009 the University Center at Everett Community College was established at Gray Wolf Hall. The University Center at Everett Community College offers over 20 bachelor's and master's degrees from eight partner universities. In 2010 Legislation was enacted (House Bill 2694) authorizing the establishment of a bachelor of science in nursing at the University Center at Everett Community College, in partnership with the UWB.

### **Summary of Bill:**

Management and leadership of the University Center at Everett Community College (University Center) is assigned to Washington State University (WSU). Everett Community College (ECC), WSU and other partner universities are required to collaborate on establishing a plan for the University Center.

A Coordinating and Planning Council (Council) is established and the Director of the University Center implements decisions of the Council and reports to the President of WSU. The membership of the council is specified, but may be modified by agreement.

The WSU in collaboration with ECC, University Center partners, and community leaders must develop a plan that addresses expansion of the range of regional educational opportunities. The plan must meet employers' needs for skilled workers by expanding high employer demand programs of study, with an initial emphasis by WSU on undergraduate and graduate engineering degree programs in a variety of engineering disciplines such as civil, mechanical, aeronautical, and aerospace manufacturing. The plan must include other specified strategies, and establish a process for program development. It must be completed by July 1, 2013.

University Center expansion needs and capital facility funding are reviewed annually by WSU in cooperation with ECC. The WSU designs, constructs, and manages any facility developed at the University Center with the exception of facilities design efforts utilizing ECC capital funding. WSU is responsible for infrastructure development and maintenance with costs shared equitably.

The act will take effect only after the HECB determines whether a needs assessment and analysis is required and, if so, conducts a needs assessment and viability determination and recommends implementation. The Office of Financial Management, the Legislature, and the Office of the Code Reviser shall be notified of the HECB's recommendations. Contingent on the HECB's recommendations, WSU's leadership role begins by July 1, 2014.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on March 15, 2011.

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