
Higher Education Committee

SB 5472

Brief Description: Authorizing applied doctorate level degrees in audiology at Western Washington University.

Sponsors: Senators Bailey, Ranker, Kohl-Welles and Becker; by request of Western Washington University.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permits the board of trustees of Western Washington University to offer applied, but not research, doctorate-level degrees in audiology.
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Hearing Date: 3/12/13

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

As directed in state statute, one of the primary purposes of regional universities is to offer undergraduate and graduate education programs through the master's degree. Eastern Washington University is the only regional university with authorization to offer graduate level degrees beyond the master's level. Legislation enacted in 2011 permitted Eastern Washington University (EWU) to offer applied doctorate-level, not research, degrees in the following areas:

- physical therapy; and
- educational specialists for individuals who already have a master's degree with a teaching or educational focus.

According to the American Academy of Audiology, the doctorate-level program, the AuD program, became the entry-level degree for the clinical practice of audiology in 2007 and the deadline for transitioning to such programs occurred in 2012.

The Occupational Outlook report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates a job growth rate for audiologists between 2010 and 2020 of 37 percent, and this is higher than the average

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projected job growth rate of 14 percent. It is estimated that there will be a need for about 4,800 additional audiologists across the nation over the ten-year period.

Washington has one doctoral-level audiology program offered by the University of Washington.

Summary of Bill:

The board of trustees of Western Washington University is authorized to offer applied, but not research, doctorate-level degrees in audiology. This authorization is subject to review.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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