

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SCR 8409

As Passed House:
March 5, 2014

Brief Description: Approving the workforce training and education coordinating board's high skills high wages plan.

Sponsors: Senators Bailey, Kohl-Welles, Chase, Rivers, Frockt, Parlette, Cleveland, Dammeier, McAuliffe, Keiser, Tom, Conway and Mullet; by request of Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Labor & Workforce Development: 2/25/14 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/5/14, 94-4.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Approves the state comprehensive plan for workforce training, "High Skills, High Wages 2012-2022," submitted by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Sells, Chair; Reykdal, Vice Chair; Manweller, Ranking Minority Member; Condotta, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Christian, Green, G. Hunt, Moeller and Ormsby.

Staff: Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) provides planning, coordination, evaluation, monitoring, and policy analysis for the state workforce training system as a whole, and advises the Governor and the Legislature concerning the training system.

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.

The Workforce Board is required to develop and maintain a 10-year state comprehensive plan for workforce training and education. The plan must establish goals, objectives, and priorities for the state training system.

Every four years, the Workforce Board must provide the Legislature and the Governor with an update of the state comprehensive plan. The Legislature, after public hearings, must approve or recommend changes to the plan and the updates by way of a concurrent resolution. Once approved, the plan becomes the state's workforce training policy unless legislation is enacted to alter the policies set forth in the plan.

The most recently updated plan, called "High Skills, High Wages 2012-2022," emphasizes a "multiple pathways" approach and includes the following goals and objectives:

- improving career and education guidance for students;
- increasing workplace and life skills development;
- expanding programs of study for career-focused courses;
- increasing workplace experiences for students;
- addressing student retention;
- prioritizing job search and placement for people in first careers;
- increasing employer engagement with the system by improving outreach;
- promoting economic development and encouraging investing in strategic economic opportunities;
- expanding learning opportunities for workers at all stages of the education and career paths;
- improving the quality and speed of job matching and referrals;
- strengthening performance accountability by focusing on employment and earnings outcomes; and
- reducing barriers to sharing or splitting funding and establishing cost-sharing practices.

Summary of Bill:

The Senate and the House of Representatives, by way of concurrent resolution, approve the state comprehensive plan for workforce training and education.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is identical to the House version that passed last session. Creating the plan was an intensive process for the Workforce Board. The Workforce Board went to all four corners of the state and got input from public and private stakeholders to develop a big picture plan to advance workforce development in the state. This comprehensive plan is necessary to outline and coordinate the state's workforce system and to align training needs with the workforce. This plan has support from labor and business.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Justin Montermini, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; and Sheri Nelson, Association of Washington Business.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.