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**SENATE BILL 5902**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Braun and Wilson

AN ACT Relating to enrollments in postsecondary certification and degree programs with an emphasis in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; and adding a new section to chapter 28B.10 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.10 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Despite an improved economy and reductions in student tuition, resident undergraduate full-time student enrollment at our state's institutions of higher education has, as a whole, remained relatively flat at a time when the state's population of youths aged eighteen to twenty-five has increased three percent. One estimate is only thirty-one percent of Washington high school students go on to attain a postsecondary credential.

Studies show that a postsecondary certification and degree programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are a gateway to a high paying career. However, there are acute shortages in high-demand programs of study, particularly in STEM, at our state's institutions of higher education. Moreover, our state's economy is highly dependent upon jobs that require STEM degrees.

In order to better match state resources to the current needs of the state's students and employers and workforce, the legislature intends to increase resident undergraduate student enrollments at our state institutions of higher education with a particular emphasis on students seeking STEM certification and degree programs.

(2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the legislature intends to increase full-time equivalent state-supported resident undergraduate student enrollment at our state's institutions of higher education.

(a) At least seventy percent of the moneys must be provided for enrollments in postsecondary certification and degree programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

(b) The remaining thirty percent of the moneys must be provided for enrollments in other areas of study. Unless otherwise specified in the omnibus operating appropriations act, institutions of higher education have the discretion to direct enrollments to other high-demand certification and degree programs that meet the unserved needs of students and employers.

(c) Each institution must report work with the education research and data center to identify these students separately from other enrollments. By September 1st of each year, each institution shall provide a report including, but not limited to, the cost per student, area of study, and progress toward graduation and degree completion. The education research and data center may also require additional information to be used to measure the success of the use of the funds for additional enrollments.

(d) The institution must report to the office of financial management on the number of additional resident undergraduate enrollments achieved with the funds. If enrollment expectations are not achieved, any unspent funds for additional enrollments must lapse. The office must provide a recommendation to the legislature whether funding to that institution should continue or be allocated to another institution.

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