

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2016

As Reported By House Committee On:

Higher Education

Title: An act relating to higher education authorizing contracts with independent colleges and universities for instructional programmatic services.

Brief Description: Authorizing the higher education coordinating board to contract for cooperative arrangements with independent colleges and universities.

Sponsors: Representatives Mulliken, Carlson, Jacobsen, Blanton, Silver and Conway.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/19/96, 1/25/96 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Mulliken, Vice Chairman; Jacobsen, Ranking Minority Member; Mason, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Benton; Blanton; Delvin; Goldsmith; Mastin; Scheuerman and Sheahan.

Staff: Suzi Morrissey (786-7120).

Background: At times, members of the public have requested the expansion of educational degree programs into areas of the state that are either unserved by public institutions, or in which public institutions are unable to offer the type of programs needed by the people in the area. Public institutions of higher education may contract with private institutions for educational services. Or, the Higher Education Coordinating Board may, at the direction of the Legislature, contract with public institutions for services. For example, the board has contracted with public institutions to provide upper division programs in the Port Angeles area. The board does not have the authority to contract with independent institutions. If the Legislature wishes to permit the board to contract with either public or private institutions for educational services, the attorney general has advised the passage of legislation permitting the board to enter those types of contracts.

Summary of Bill: Under certain conditions, the Higher Education Coordinating Board may contract with independent colleges and universities to provide instructional

programs. The conditions are as follows: there has been a finding of need for a program; the contract is the most cost-effective way of providing a service to students in a particular locality; the criteria for evaluating proposals is uniform; and only resident students will be served by the contract. Participation is limited to nonprofit, independent institutions that are located in the state and are accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges or by an accreditation association recognized by the board. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will identify the localities and instructional areas suitable for contracts, will require that appropriate fiscal accountability measures are in place, and will provide biennial reports to the Governor and the Legislature on any contracts with independent institutions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Passage of this bill will give the Legislature one additional tool to meet the daunting enrollment challenge facing the state in the next 15 to 25 years. Its implementation will help expand opportunity in a cost-effective way by allowing the state to use facilities and expertise in independent institutions. Implementation of this legislation will enhance cooperation among public and independent colleges, and will facilitate the expansion of classes and programs offered jointly by public and private colleges and universities.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Loren Anderson (pro); Susan Patrick, Higher Education Coordinating Board (pro); and Tom Parker, Washington Friends of Higher Education (pro).