

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2292

As Reported By House Committee On:

Higher Education
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to incentive grants for innovation and quality.

Brief Description: Establishing the innovation and quality in higher education program.

Sponsors: Representatives Carlson, Jacobsen and Murray; by request of Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/18/96, 1/23/96 [DPS];
Appropriations: 2/3/96 [DP2S(w/o sub HE)].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Jacobsen, Ranking Minority Member; Mason, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Blanton; Delvin; Mastin; Scheuerman and Sheahan.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Mulliken, Vice Chairman; Benton and Goldsmith.

Staff: Suzi Morrissey (786-7120).

Background: In 1991, the Washington fund for excellence in higher education program was established in law. The purpose of the program is to encourage institutions of higher education to develop innovative and collaborative solutions to critical, state-wide educational challenges facing the state. The Higher Education Coordinating Board is responsible for program administration. When funding is available, the board will provide grants on a competitive basis to public colleges or consortia of colleges. The grants cannot last more than two years.

The program has never received funding.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Washington Fund for Excellence in Higher Education program is renamed. In its place, the Washington Fund for Innovation and Quality program is established. Through the program, incentive grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to institutions of higher education and their faculties. Guidelines for the program will be developed by the Higher Education Coordinating Board. The guidelines will be consistent with certain outcomes described in the bill. These include increasing access, improving time to degree, improving student learning, and increasing efficiency and collaboration between higher education institutions and the private sector.

Grants may be available for innovative collaborative programs and individual projects proposed by institutions or faculty. Examples of collaborative programs include developing a three-year degree, reducing the time needed to complete a baccalaureate program, and developing a degree to be offered on the Internet. Examples of individual projects include efforts to improve efficiency by 5 percent each year, improve student retention, and develop competencies and outcomes for general education or university requirements and degree programs. Grants may also be available for initiatives that encourage minority participation and enhance a collaborative approach to training new teachers.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Faculty may apply for grants; diversity, student retention, and teacher preparation efforts are eligible for funding; and the trust fund was renamed.

Appropriation: The sum of \$5 million from the general fund.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 12, 1996.

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

Testimony For: This program is modeled on a couple of successful programs designed to encourage and support innovations in higher education. The Evergreen State College's Washington Center for Undergraduate Education ran a very successful competitive grant program for eight years. Through that program, collaborative projects were supported for \$3,000 per project each year. Many of the projects were designed to bring faculty members from different educational sectors together to address issues of common concern. The federal Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education program is another such program. Through the program, the federal government has sponsored cost-effective projects that increase efficiencies and enhance student learning.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Kim Merriman, The Evergreen State College (pro); Susan Patrick, Higher Education Coordinating Board (pro); Kelly Egan, Washington State Council of Faculty Representatives (pro); Tom Parker, Washington Friends of Higher Education (pro); Wendy Rader-Konofalsk, Washington Federation of Teachers (concerns); Carolyn Clark, Washington State University faculty (pro); Keith Boyd and David Rieter, Washington Student Lobby (pro); Jasper McSlarrow, Amit Ranole, Mark Alway, Winston Danseco, Dawn Michelle Hewett, John Linder, Alexis Babcock, Martin Edlund, Barney Gill, Shelley Slate, Matt Hals, Nan Hossey and Larry Chin, University of Washington via video-teleconference (pro); Elizabeth Stevenson, Shoreline Community College and Barbara Simonetti, Clark Community College via video-teleconference (pro); Jesse Harris, John Robinson, Doug Wood, David Fassler, Michael Morris and Sarah Field, Washington State University via video-teleconference (pro).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass and do not pass the substitute bill by Committee on Higher Education. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Huff, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; H. Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Beeksma; Brumsickle; Carlson; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; Dellwo; Dyer; Foreman; Grant; Hickel; Jacobsen; Kessler; Lambert; Linville; McMorris; Poulsen; Reams; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott and Wolfe.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Hargrove.

Staff: Jennifer Priddy (786-7118).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee on Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee on Higher Education: The \$5 million state general fund appropriation to the Higher Education Coordinating Board is deleted, and a null and void clause is added.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 12, 1996.

Effective Date Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void if not funded in the state budget.

Testimony For: Very often institutions would like to experiment with new ways of doing business, but allocating the funding to a new project usually means that another

project must be scaled back. Grants to fund innovative projects, even very small grants, have a significant impact. This proposal would provide institutions with the resources to experiment with ways of becoming more efficient and improving undergraduate education.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Susan Patrick, Higher Education Coordinating Board; and Barbara Smith, The Evergreen State College.