

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2292

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

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].

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 Postsecondary 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); Kieth Boyd and David Rieter, Washington Student Lobby (pro); Jasper McSarrow, 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).