

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5644

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to establishing a community college in the People's Republic of China.

Brief Description: Developing a proposal to establish a community college in the People's Republic of China.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Wood, Kohl, Fraser, Prince and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 3/23/95, 3/30/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Mulliken, Vice Chairman; Jacobsen, Ranking Minority Member; Mason, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Benton; Blanton; Delvin; Goldsmith; Mastin and Sheahan.

Staff: Susan Hosch (786-7120).

Background: The 53rd Legislature established the Washington Task Force on International Education and Cultural Exchanges. The task force was charged with recommending policies, programs, and activities that will help to ensure that students at all education levels have an education that includes an understanding of the languages, culture, history, and government of peoples of and from other lands and other indigenous cultures. The task force delivered a preliminary report to the Legislature in December 1993. The report provided a snapshot of the international education activities in which the state is currently involved. The October 1994 final report recognized that Washington State's economic future is world trade, and that citizens must be provided with the tools they need to work in the international arena. The task force made six broad recommendations to the Legislature.

In its second recommendation, the task force stated that enhancing Washington's place in the world trade market requires the creation of opportunities to provide our

developing and targeted trade partners with education in our public and private institutions. Their report asserts that these opportunities would open the way for Washington students to study abroad by requiring the establishment of reciprocal exchange programs with these targeted countries. Within the recommendation, the task force suggested that a group of college presidents and administrators study the feasibility of strengthening educational connections with the People's Republic of China through the establishment of a Washington overseas branch campus.

Edmonds Community College, in partnership with a Japanese group, has established a branch campus in Kobe, Japan.

Summary of Bill: A planning committee is created to develop a proposal for establishing a community college in the People's Republic of China. The planning committee membership shall include, but need not be limited to: three community college presidents, a president of a public four-year institution of higher education, one representative from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, one representative from the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB), and the Secretary of State.

The planning committee will present two reports to the Governor, the Office of Financial Management, and the Legislature. The preliminary report will be delivered by November 1995. The final report will be delivered by September 1, 1996.

Broad parameters for any proposed college campus are included in the bill. The parameters include the direction that the campus be a joint venture of the state and the government of the People's Republic of China, that the goal of the campus be the provision of an associate degree to students from Washington and China, and that credit earned at the campus be transferable to Washington's baccalaureate institutions. In addition, the programs are intended to be comparable to programs offered in Washington State by community colleges. Chinese students who transfer from the campus to a Washington baccalaureate institution must sign a commitment letter stating that they will return to China once they complete their degrees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1995.

Testimony For: Washington's economic future is closely tied to world trade. Soon, two out of five jobs in the state will involve some aspect of international trade. Washington has more trade with China than any other state. With some Asian countries including China, the economic relationships are not as important as long

term relationships between governments, businesses and people. Creating an educational campus that is a joint venture of the state and the People's Republic of China will help to foster the long-term relationships needed to enhance Washington's economic goals. The Chinese government is interested in developing community colleges throughout the country. A campus would also provide educational opportunities abroad for Washington's students and faculty. This bill proposes a study. Only if the study is accepted by the Legislature will any future costs be incurred.

Testimony Against: If a new community college is created, funding for the college should not compete with funding for existing colleges. The timelines should be extended to give the planning committee additional time to explore the issues of creating a college abroad

Testified: Ralph Munro, Secretary of State (in favor).