

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2211

As Reported By House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to work force training.

Brief Description: Relating to work force training.

Sponsors: Representatives McMorris, Clements, Boldt, Lisk and D. Sommers.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 3/3/97, 3/14/97, 3/27/97 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives McMorris, Chairman; Honeyford, Vice Chairman; Conway, Ranking Minority Member; Wood, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Clements; Cole; Hatfield and Lisk.

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7166).

Background: The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) was established in 1991, in part, as a response to a need to coordinate and direct a fragmented and complex workforce training and education system. It is a system that includes vocational training at the high school level, vocational and literacy training at community and technical colleges, retraining for dislocated workers, training through private career schools, apprenticeships and training for economically disadvantaged individuals. Many state and federally funded training programs target certain groups of individuals and make it difficult to combine and redirect funds. In establishing the board, the Legislature found there was no comprehensive and strategic plan to guide all parts of the system and make it responsive.

The WTECB is charged with a number of duties to be performed in cooperation with the agencies involved in the state's workforce training and education system. These duties include developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for workforce training, establishing minimum standards to be used by agencies in evaluating programs they implement, providing coordination among the different agencies and components of the state's training system at the state and regional level, establishing

and maintaining an inventory of state programs and related programs of the state's training system, and identifying policies to reduce administrative and other barriers to the efficient operation and coordination of the state's workforce and development system.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Legislature finds that despite the efforts directed at identifying goals, performance indicators, standards and evaluation criteria for the workforce development system, the system remains unduly fragmented. The Legislature further finds that the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board must intensify its efforts to identify program funding, identify options for program consolidation, and identify where coordination of related programs can redirect resources to programs that most effectively meet the needs of businesses that produce family wage jobs.

By December 1, 1997, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board must prepare a comprehensive report to the Legislature identifying all workforce training programs in Washington. The report must include the following informational elements: each program's funding sources and whether matching funds are required to receive the funds; whether waivers are available from program or funding regulations; program participation requirements for entry into the program; the type of training and services provided under the program; the number and geographic representation of participants in each program; a review of program regulations; a review of program completion rates over a 5-year period; and a review of job placement rates in relation to training activities over a 5-year period. All workforce training programs in the state must participate in the preparation of the report, and any failure to participate will be noted in the report.

By December 1, 1997, the board must make recommendations to the Legislature based on the comprehensive report and current evaluation reports that modify, consolidate, or eliminate programs previously identified to improve efficiency, looking first at certain specified programs that streamline and coordinate program offerings and direct training resources in response to local market demand. Recommendation must also include improvements to program effectiveness measured by retention and completion rates for program participants and job placement rates in relation to training activities. Program— does not include activities of individual institutions or individual fields of study or course.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee is directed to conduct a performance evaluation of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board and duties assigned to the board and must report its findings to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 1997.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill declared the Legislature's intent to direct the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating

Board to develop a matrix of all work force training programs, state and federal, along with participation requirements and resources allocated to the program. The substitute bill directs the board to prepare a comprehensive report and specifies certain elements to be contained in the report. Recommendations must be made to the Legislature based on the information identified in the report and on the current evaluation reports that modify, consolidate or eliminate programs. The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee must conduct a performance evaluation of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill sends a clear message to the board. The board must intensify its efforts to identify program funding and options for program consolidation and coordination of related programs to redirect resources to programs that most effectively meet the needs of businesses that produce family wage jobs for workers in our state. Two assignments are given to the board. Information is identified that must be included in a report on all work force training programs in the state. This information is to include expenditures of the program by administrative expenditure and direct service expenditure. This is the first time that the Legislature has asked for this kind of information from the board. This is an efficiency assignment rather than another evaluation of the effectiveness of programs that the board has conducted in the past. The report must also include whether there are matching funds required, whether there are waivers allowed, the number of program participants and geographic distribution, any eligibility requirements and the types of services offered by the program. This assignment is hard and the time lines are aggressive, but it is doable. The second assignment also deals with efficiency. This report is based on evaluations that the board has done to date and the assignment on expenditures. It will include recommendations for modification, consolidation and elimination of programs. It is very helpful that the bill states who must be included at a minimum. It is helpful that the agencies on whom the board must depend for information are instructed to cooperate.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Ellen O'Brien Saunders, Work Force Training and Education Coordinating Board.