

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1013

As Passed House:

March 12, 1999

Title: An act relating to the Washington fund for innovation and quality in higher education program.

Brief Description: Changing the goals and priorities for grants under the Washington fund for innovation and quality education program.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Higher Education (Originally sponsored by Representatives Carlson, Radcliff, Dunn and Sheahan).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/26/99, 2/5/99 [DPS];

Appropriations: 3/3/99, 3/6/99 [DPS(HE)].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/12/99, 91-5.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Modifies the purposes and priorities for awarding grants to institutions of higher education under the Washington Fund for Innovation and Quality in Higher Education program.
- Restructures the administration of the program by establishing two funds: one administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board and one administered by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Carlson, Republican Co-Chair; Kenney, Democratic Co-Chair; Lantz, Democratic Vice Chair; Radcliff, Republican Vice Chair; Dunn; Edmonds and Esser.

Staff: Sherie Story (786-7120).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Higher Education be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Huff, Republican Co-Chair; H. Sommers, Democratic Co-Chair; Alexander, Republican Vice Chair; Doumit, Democratic Vice Chair; D. Schmidt, Republican Vice Chair; Barlean; Carlson; Clements; Cody; Gombosky; Grant; Kagi; Keiser; Kenney; Lambert; Linville; Lisk; Mastin; McIntire; McMorris; Parlette; Regala; Rockefeller; Ruderman; Sullivan; Tokuda and Wensman.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Benson; Boldt; Crouse and Mulliken.

Staff: Mary Alice Grobins (786-7118).

Background:

The 1991 Legislature established the Washington Fund for Excellence in Higher Education program. The purpose of the program is to encourage institutions of higher education to develop innovative and collaborative solutions to critical, statewide educational challenges facing the state. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) is responsible for administering the program. When funding is available, the board is to provide two-year grants on a competitive basis to public colleges or consortia of colleges. To date, the program has not received funding.

The 1991 act specified three issues of critical statewide need:

- (1) Improving rates of participation and completion at each educational level;
- (2) Recognizing needs of special populations of students; and
- (3) Improving the effectiveness of education by better coordinating communication and understanding between sectors.

The 1991 act also specified the priority guidelines for grants that might be awarded for the 1991-93 biennium. It then assigned to the HECB, with the assistance of a review committee, the responsibility for establishing specific grant priority guidelines for each subsequent biennium.

The original priority guidelines set forth for the 1991-93 biennium included:

- (a) Minority and diversity initiatives that encourage the participation of minorities in higher education, including students with disabilities, at a rate consistent with their proportion of the population;
- (b) K-12 teacher preparation models that encourage collaboration between higher education and K-12 to improve the preparedness of teachers, including provisions for higher education faculty involved with teacher preparation to spend time teaching in K-12 schools; and
- (c) Articulation and transfer activities to smooth the transfer of students from K-12 to higher education, or from the community colleges and technical colleges to four-year institutions.

The 1996 Legislature modified the program by renaming it the Washington Fund for Innovation and Quality in Higher Education program and by specifying grant priority guidelines for the 1995-97 biennium.

The priority guidelines set forth for the 1995-97 biennium included the three from the 1991-93 biennium and added to them the following:

- (a) Multi-institutional or multi-faculty development and evaluation of:
 - i. Collaborative instructional programs involving K-12, community and technical colleges, and four-year institutions of higher education to develop a three-year degree program, or reduce the time to degree;
 - ii. Instructional technology and multimedia curricular projects; and
 - iii. A degree offered entirely on the internet;
- (b) Individual institutional or faculty pilot projects to:
 - i. Improve efficiency by 5 percent per year in cost or graduation rate;
 - ii. Improve student retention;
 - iii. Develop competencies and outcomes for general education or university requirements and degree programs;
 - iv. Contracts with public or private institutions or businesses to provide services or the development of collaborative programs; and
- (c) Other innovative proposals.

Summary of Bill:

The original (1991) issues of critical statewide need are replaced with the following issues:

- (1) Recognizing needs of special populations of students;
- (2) Furthering the development of learner-centered, technology-assisted course delivery;
- (3) Furthering the development of competency-based measurements of student achievement to be used as the basis for awarding degrees and certificates; and
- (4) Increasing the collaboration among both public and private sector institutions of higher education.

The priority guidelines specified (in 1996) for the 1995-97 biennium are replaced by guidelines for the 1999-01 biennium. These include:

- (a) Minority and diversity initiatives that encourage the participation of minorities in higher education, including students with disabilities;
- (b) K-12 teacher preparation models that encourage collaboration between higher education and K-12 to improve the preparedness of teachers, including provisions for higher education faculty involved with teacher preparation to spend time teaching in K-12 schools;
- (c) Collaborative instructional programs involving K-12, community and technical colleges, and four-year institutions of higher education to develop a three-year degree program, or reduce the time to degree;
- (d) Contracts with public or private institutions or businesses to provide services or the development of collaborative programs;
- (e) Articulation and transfer activities to smooth the transfer of students from K-12 to higher education, or from the community colleges and technical colleges to four-year institutions;
- (f) Projects that further the development of learner-centered, technology-assisted course delivery; and

- (g) Projects that further the development of competency-based measurements of student achievement to be used as the basis for awarding degrees and certificates.

The administration of the program is restructured by establishing two funds: one administered by the HECB and one administered by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). The HECB is made responsible for proposals in which a four-year institution of higher education is named as the lead institution and the SBCTC is made responsible for proposals in which a community or technical college is named as the lead institution. Both boards are required to have representatives from both the four-year and two-year sectors on their respective grant review committees.

September 1 is established as a deadline for awarding grants in those years when funding is made available by June 30.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: (Higher Education) (Original bill) The HECB supports the program and hopes that money is made available to fund it. The board supports the requirement to have both two-year and four-year representatives on the review committee. The board is willing to explore funding options such as partnerships with business. The SBCTC supports the goals set forth in HB 1013 as they are consistent with the board's goals. The SBCTC also supports reinstating the diversity goals as these are also consistent with the board's goals. The SBCTC requests an amendment clarifying its responsibilities in administering the program. The Council of Faculty Representatives supports this bill. It especially likes the inclusion of new methods of course delivery as a new priority for awarding collaborative grants. The Evergreen State College (TESC) supports this program. Competitive grant programs to inspire teamwork and collaboration have proven successful at the federal level under the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grant program and at TESC where an endowment was created to fund innovative proposals. Western Washington University supports this program and is optimistic about funding because of its recent funding experience raising money for distinguished professorships. The higher education community is demoralized by the punitive approach to accountability and would welcome the opportunity to compete for incentive funding. The Washington Association for Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) supports the bill because it thinks incentives are appropriate and because it believes this bill is looking toward the future.

Testimony For: (Appropriations) (Substitute bill) This bill will encourage collaborative, learner-centered, competency-based programs in higher education. It will provide a way to move away from "seat time" as a measure of competency. It will reward institutions for innovative approaches. This approach has been used at The Evergreen State College, where a fund for innovation was established and which has endowed a series of innovative, risky efforts. The goals of this program are consistent with the accountability recommendations the Higher Education Coordinating Board has made to the Governor and Legislature.

Testimony Against: (Higher Education) None.

Testimony Against: (Appropriations) None.

Testified: (Higher Education) (Original Bill) Bruce Botka, Higher Education Coordinating Board; Jan Yoshiwara, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Carolyn Clark, Council of Faculty Representatives; Kim Merriman, The Evergreen State College; Judy McNickle, Western Washington University; and Tom Parker, Washington Association for Independent Colleges and Universities.

Testified: (Appropriations) Representative Carlson, prime sponsor; Kim Merriman, The Evergreen State College; and Bruce Botka, Higher Education Coordinating Board.