

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HCR 4402

As Reported by House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Brief Description: Adopting the update to the state comprehensive plan for work force training and education.

Sponsors: By Representatives Kenney, Cox, Clements, Conway and McIntire; by request of Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 1/21/02, 2/1/02 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Adopts goals set forth in the updated comprehensive plan for work force training and education.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Kenney and Lysen.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Clements, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler and McMorris.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134).

Background:

Executive Order 99-02 directs the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) to develop a state unified plan for work force development as described in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. State law requires the board to develop a comprehensive plan for work force training and education, update it every two years, and submit it to the Legislature for approval.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Legislature adopts the following goals set forth in the updated comprehensive plan:

- Close the gap between the need of employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need;
- Implement a strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training, including enabling students to move up the career ladder over their lifetimes;
- Develop a wage and education and training progression strategy for low-income workers; and
- Make worksource a reality so that work force development programs are customer friendly and accessible.

Specific progress will be made in improving operating agencies and reducing the earnings gap facing people of color, adults with disabilities, and women.

The Legislature endorses specific objectives and strategies for partners in the work force development system to meet these goals.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute resolution makes the following changes to the original resolution: (1) adds, as part of the challenges to be faced, the need to enable workers to have seamless access to lifelong learning at all levels of education and, as part of the plan's goal of putting into place a strategy for dislocated and incumbent workers, a goal of enabling students to move up the career ladder over their lifetimes; (2) adds a fourth goal of making worksource a reality so that work force development programs are customer friendly and accessible; (3) deletes language that would have addressed specific progress by operating agencies in reducing the earnings gap for specified employees; and (4) deletes sections commending the WTECB for producing the comprehensive plan.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: This resolution is part of the statutory process of the WTECB, much like the Higher Education Coordinating Board's process. The WTECB is starting to focus on the role of work force skills in economic development and is attempting to build strategies in concert with employers, using industry skills panels. There are several "best practices" programs and a new Internet program that helps link employees with training

opportunities.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Ellen O'Brien Saunders and Bryan Wilson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; and Randy Loomans, Washington State Labor Council.