

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5992

As Passed Senate, March 10, 1995

Title: An act relating to the work force training and education coordinating board.

Brief Description: Clarifying the role of the work force training and education coordinating board.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Trade (originally sponsored by Senators Bauer, Pelz, Wood, Prince, Kohl, Deccio, Heavey and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Trade: 2/24/95, 3/1/95 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 3/10/95, 42-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & TRADE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5992 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Pelz, Chair; Heavey, Vice Chair; Deccio, Franklin, Fraser, Hale, Newhouse, Palmer and Wojahn.

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

Background: In 1991, the Legislature created the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board and charged it with making the state's workforce education and training system better coordinated, more efficient, more responsive to the needs of business and workers, and more accountable for its performance. The coordinating board's authorizing statute directs it to develop and maintain a comprehensive plan for workforce training, require a minimum of core data and establish minimum standards for program evaluation by the operating agencies of the state training system, and perform outcome-based, net-impact, and cost-benefit evaluations of the system as a whole.

The board's comprehensive plan was released last fall. The board's authorizing statute does not require legislative action approving its comprehensive plan and sets no deadlines for its evaluation functions.

In 1992, Congress amended the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) to require each state to have a Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC) to carry out coordination functions, similar to the requirements of the board. Governor Gardner responded with a designation of the board as the HRIC, even though its composition is slightly different from that required in the JTPA amendment. There is no statutory requirement that the board act as the HRIC.

Summary of Bill: The board is required to report annually to the Legislature regarding progress in implementing the state comprehensive plan for workforce training and education.

The board's comprehensive plan must be updated every two years and submitted to the Legislature for approval. The operating agencies represented on the board develop operating plans for their workforce development efforts that comply with the comprehensive plan and report yearly to the board on their progress under the plan.

The board performs the functions of the Human Resource Investment Council and advises the Governor and Legislature on integrating federal and state workforce development efforts.

Deadlines are established for (1) notifying operating agencies on common data and minimum evaluation standards required of them; (2) programmatic and systemwide evaluations; (3) an assessment of supply and demand for training services accompanied by recommendations on how to bridge any gap between the supply and the demand; and, (4) identifying barriers and making recommendations regarding the seamless delivery of workforce development services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 22, 1995.

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

Testimony For: This bill puts accountability mechanisms in place to meet customer needs. The clarification and guidance the bill provides is good.

Testimony Against: The board should not be the HRIC. The timelines need to be extended.

Testified: PRO: Ellen O'Brien Saunders, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Tom Dooley, AWB; Jeff Johnson, WA State Labor Council; J. Tuman, WA Federation of Private Vocational Schools; CON: Susan Longstreth, WA Council on Vocational Education; NEUTRAL: Vernon Stoner, Employment Security Department; Dan McConnon, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

House Amendment(s): The Legislature intends to seek broad input on the allocation of any federal block granted funds. The date by which the workforce board must specify common data to be collected by operating agencies is changed from July 1, 1995 to December 31, 1995.