

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6506

As of January 16, 1996

Title: An act relating to higher education fiscal matters.

Brief Description: Requiring student approval before technology fees are implemented at institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Senators Bauer, Wood, Drew, Prince and Rinehart.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/16/96.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: According to a recent article in The Chronicle of Higher Education, colleges and universities are struggling to meet the demand for student access to computers and networks. That demand has doubled, tripled or quadrupled in some instances. Higher education institutions are considering a variety of solutions, including raising student technology fees, extending computer networks into dormitory rooms, requiring students to own personal computers, and contracting with companies to improve dial-in network access from homes and dormitories.

Summary of Bill: The governing boards of each institution of higher education may establish a technology fee separate from tuition fees and services and activities fees. The initial technology fee rate must not exceed 4 percent of the full-time resident undergraduate tuition and services and activities fees rate in the academic year before the implementation of the fee. The technology fee is used for purposes clearly related to the fee.

To establish the fee or to eliminate the fee requires that the student body must vote on the measure and the measure must be agreed to by a majority of the student body voting on the measure.

A student advisory group reviews the annual expenditure plan for the fee revenue.

Adjustments to the amount of the technology fee must be agreed upon by the governing board and the respective government association or its equivalent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 16, 1996.

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