

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1484

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to faculty salary increments for community and technical colleges.

Brief Description: Providing a specific funding mechanism for making additional community and technical college faculty salary increment awards.

Sponsors: Representatives Carlson, Kenney, Radcliff, Bush, Mason, Talcott, Butler, Quall, Doumit, Van Luven, Dunn, Sheahan, Ogden, Linville, Conway, Morris, Tokuda, Kessler, Hatfield, Scott, Blalock, Gombosky, Mulliken and Dickerson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/20/97, 2/25/97 [DPA].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Radcliff, Vice Chairman; Mason, Ranking Minority Member; Kenney, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Butler; Dunn; O'Brien; Sheahan and Van Luven.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: Salary increments are pay increases which are based on years of service and, in some pay systems, educational attainment.

Classified employees within the state personnel system receive 5 percent increments for each year of service for a total of five steps for each position. Classified employee increments are not funded by the Legislature with the assumption that employee turnover and other savings are sufficient to support the increases. Classified staff in the K-12 system receive increments based on local collective bargaining agreements. Increments are not funded through the state funding formula; turnover and other locally available sources are used for classified increment costs.

Certificated instructional staff in the K-12 system receive step increments for longevity and educational attainment which are funded through the state allocation

system. While the allocation formula is used for state funding purposes, salaries for certificated staff are negotiated at the local level through collective bargaining.

Faculty salaries in community colleges are negotiated through collective bargaining. State law limits salary increases related to these agreements to the percentage established by the Legislature in the appropriations act. The law further states that the collective bargaining agreements are not binding upon future actions of the Legislature. Because the increases are limited to specific appropriations, the use of turnover savings for salary increments is prohibited. Consequently, increments have been foregone when no salary increases have been provided. Subsequent salary increases were then obligated, by the local agreements, to fund the deferred increments. As a result, there were periods when faculty no longer eligible for increments received little or no cost-of-living adjustments even though legislative appropriation was provided for salary increases. This situation occurred in 1986 and 1987.

The Legislature has provided funds specifically for community college faculty increments in 1991-93, 1994, and the 1995-97 budget. At these times language was included in the appropriations act which overrode the statutory provision prohibiting the use of turnover savings for faculty increments.

Summary of Amended Bill: Community and technical college boards of trustees will award faculty salary increments based on local agreements. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges will include in its biennial budgets the cost to fund faculty increments. This cost should factor-in turnover savings. It is the intent of the Legislature that the cost of increments, excluding turnover savings, be funded by appropriation. The appropriation shall not exceed 1.5 percent of the total faculty base salary. The board will distribute the funds in a fair and equitable manner. The board will convene a task force to advise the board on guidelines for fair and equitable distribution.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The amendment provides that the board will determine increments, instead of requiring the board to award increments.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The Legislature treats community colleges differently than K-12. The Legislature should provide funding for community colleges that is similar to the K-12 system. This bill is an attempt to standardize the process. In the community

college system, each community college bargains the salary schedule. There are 32 different salary schedules in the system. The salary schedule for community colleges is slowly eroding because of the lack of predictable and consistent increment increases. A salary schedule recognizes and puts value on professional development. Increments are a critical element of the salary schedule.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Scott Morgan, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Federation of Teachers; Richard Cox, Instructor, Spokane Community College; and Richard Davis, Instructor, Everett Community College.