

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2182

As Reported By House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to the compact for education.

Brief Description: Adopting the compact for education.

Sponsors: Representatives Haigh, Quall, Carlson, Rockefeller, Eickmeyer, Miloscia, Kastama, Veloria and Romero.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/27/00 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Washington rejoins the Education Commission of the States by adopting the Compact for Education.
- Washington's seven commissioners will include the Governor, four legislators, one from each caucus of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and two members appointed by the Governor. One of the Governor's appointments will be a member of the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Quall, Democratic Co-Chair; Talcott, Republican Co-Chair; Haigh, Democratic Vice Chair; Carlson; Cox; Keiser; Rockefeller; Santos; D. Schmidt; Stensen and Thomas.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Schindler, Republican Vice Chair and Wensman.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

The Education Commission of the States is a nonprofit, nationwide compact of states and territories formed in 1965 to help Governors, state legislators, state education officials, and others develop policies to improve the quality of education. A state or territory becomes a member of the commission by adopting the Compact for Education.

The commission is a bipartisan organization that attempts to help state policymakers build partnerships, share information, and facilitate the development of educational policies based on the best available research and practices. Forty-nine states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands are members of the commission. Each participant is represented by its Governor and six other commissioners. The commissioners include legislators, school board members, chief state school officers, college presidents, superintendents and teachers. States have latitude in the types of expertise they wish to see included in their delegations.

The commission is supported through a combination of state fees, state contracts and grants from foundations, businesses, and the federal government. State fees are determined through a formula based on state population and per capita income. Almost one-half of the commission's budget is provided through state fees.

Washington was a member of the commission from 1967 to 1994. The state's participation in the commission was formalized through the statutory adoption of the Compact for Education (Chapter 28A.695). The statute was repealed in the 1994 supplemental operating budget. The supplemental budget also directed the Governor to give the required one year's notice of Washington's decision to end its participation in the compact. At that time, Washington paid about \$60,000 per year in state fees to the commission.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Compact for Education is adopted. Through its adoption, Washington rejoins the Education Commission of the States. The purposes of the compact include the establishment and maintenance of cooperation in educational policy among leaders from the executive and legislative branches of government, and professional and lay leaders in kindergarten through higher education. The compact will provide a forum for discussion of educational issues and a clearinghouse of information on educational challenges, including different strategies underway in different states and localities to meet those challenges.

Each state shall select seven commissioners. Unless the laws of the state provide for a different composition, the seven members will include the Governor; two legislators, one from each chamber; and four members appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor. If the laws of the state prevent legislators from serving on the commission, the Governor will appoint the other six members. One of those appointed by the Governor will be the head of a state agency or institution that has responsibility for public education. Commission members are intended to collectively represent the broad interests of state government, higher education, the state educational system, local education, and educational leadership.

The compact also describes the powers, duties, and operating principles of the commission, its relationship to the federal government, the composition of its governing structure and its financial arrangements with the members. Members may join the compact by adopting it in law. Member states and territories incur an obligation to provide an equitable share of the financial support required for the commission. Members may withdraw from the compact through a letter sent from the Governor to other Governors on the commission. The Governor must provide one year's notice of the state's intent to withdraw from the compact.

Additional laws implementing the compact are adopted. The seven members of the commission from Washington will be the Governor, four legislators, one from each caucus of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and two members appointed by the Governor. One of the members appointed by the Governor will be a member of the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission. Legislative members will serve from the time of appointment until the end of the regular session each odd-numbered year. Legislators are eligible to serve only as long as they remain in office. Commission members appointed by the Governor will serve at the Governor's pleasure. The Governor will chair the delegation.

The commissioners will have their travel expenses paid through funds appropriated by the state for that purpose. Commissioners are required to cooperate with entities that have an interest in education. Officers of the state are directed to assist the commission on matters falling within the officer's jurisdictions. Government agencies and employees are directed to furnish information and data to the commissioners upon request.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Four rather than two members of the delegation will be legislators. One legislator from each caucus will be selected. One of the members appointed by the Governor will be a member of the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2000.

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

Testimony For: The Education Commission of the States provides objective information to help legislators around the country make research based, informed decisions about educational policy. The organization contains a clearinghouse on educational policy initiatives from states throughout the country. Washington, the only state that isn't a member of the commission, has been receiving free services from it. It is time for the state to rejoin and support the commission.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Kathy Haigh, prime sponsor.