
Higher Education Committee

HB 2107

Brief Description: Authorizing a statewide student association.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Cox, Ormsby, Rodne, Williams, Upthegrove and McDermott.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to recognize one statewide student association for the public four-year institutions, supported by a fee paid by students not to exceed one quarter of 1 percent of resident undergraduate tuition.
- Requires a Board of Directors to direct the operation of the association, which carries out educational, issue advocacy, and awareness activities.

Hearing Date: 2/25/05

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

The Washington Student Lobby (WSL) is a non-profit organization that advocates for and lobbies government organizations on behalf of students attending the state's public four-year institutions. The student government associations at the public four-year institutions are voluntarily affiliated with the WSL. Each campus association has two representatives on the WSL Board of Directors, plus one representative each from the graduate students of Washington State University and the University of Washington.

At some institutions, students can choose to contribute a fee to support the activities of the WSL. The fee ranges from \$2 to \$4 per quarter or semester. At the University of Washington, the student government sends a contribution out of its budget. The total annual budget for the WSL is approximately \$25,000.

Summary of Bill:

The HECB will recognize one statewide student association for the state's public four-year institutions. Each recognized campus student government association must be affiliated with the statewide association, and all students on those campuses are considered members unless they choose not to be.

A mandatory fee, approved by the HECB, may be assessed on all students at four-year institutions except those who choose not to be members of the statewide association. The fee cannot exceed one-quarter of 1 percent of resident undergraduate tuition. The HEBCB also approves any fee increases. The fee is collected by the four-year institutions and transferred at least twice a year to the statewide association. The institution may retain an administrative fee of no more than 5 percent.

A Board of Directors will direct the operation of the statewide association. Board officers must represent the diversity of the four-year institutions, including under-represented groups.

The statewide association carries out educational, issue advocacy, and awareness activities in the interest of its members and is not prohibited from lobbying government institutions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.