

SENATE BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1794

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education, March 25, 2005
Ways & Means, April 1, 2005

Title: An act relating to expanding access to baccalaureate degree programs.

Brief Description: Expanding access to baccalaureate degree programs.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Kenney, Cox, Sommers, Fromhold, Priest, Sells, Moeller, Hasegawa, Conway, Ormsby, McCoy, Roberts, Kessler, Darneille, O'Brien, Murray, Dickerson, Lantz, Williams, Chase, Hunter, Lovick, Dunshee, Kagi, Morrell, Haigh, McDermott, Wood and Hudgins).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/11/05, 80-14.

Committee Activity: Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: 3/21/05, 3/25/05 [DPA-WM, w/oRec].

Ways & Means: 3/31/05, 4/1/05 [DPA, DNP, w/oRec].

Brief Summary Engrossed Second Substitute Bill As Amended

- Authorizes the University of Washington (UW) Bothell and Tacoma, and Washington State University (WSU) Tri-Cities to begin offering lower division courses in fields not addressed by local community colleges. UW-Tacoma and UW-Bothell may directly admit freshmen and sophomores.
- Authorizes WSU-Vancouver to begin admitting freshmen and sophomores.
- Authorizes WSU Tri-Cities to admit freshmen and sophomores for a bachelor's program in biotechnology.
- Authorizes four community or technical colleges to offer applied baccalaureate degrees on a pilot basis, subject to approval by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and the Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- Directs Everett Community College to develop an educational plan for the North Snohomish Island Skagit (NSIS) consortium based on the university center model, including moving the consortium to the college campus.
- Directs the SBCTC to select three community or technical colleges to enter into an agreement with a four-year institution to offer bachelor's degrees on the college campus.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING, K-12 & HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Weinstein, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Berkey, Carrell, Delvin, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Rasmussen, Rockefeller and Shin.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Schoesler.

Staff: Heather Lewis-Lechner (786-7448)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Hewitt, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Pridemore, Rasmussen, Regala, Rockefeller and Thibaudeau.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Fairley.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Parlette and Schoesler.

Staff: Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

Background: Branch Campuses: Branch campuses were created by statute in 1989. At that time, five branch campuses were established in growing urban areas to be operated by the University of Washington (UW) and Washington State University (WSU). The University of Washington campuses are located in Tacoma and Bothell. The Washington State University campuses were originally located in Vancouver, the Tri-Cities, and Spokane. Under legislation passed last session, the campus in Spokane is no longer considered a branch campus but the other two remain.

The missions of the branch campuses, as established by statute, are to expand access to higher education and contribute to regional economic development through collaboration with community and technical colleges. The branch campuses are responsible for ensuring expansion of upper division and graduate programs in their regions.

The Legislature has also recognized, in statute, that there are alternative models by which to achieve the primary mission and that some campuses may have additional secondary missions in response to regional needs. Under the legislation passed last session, the branch campuses were directed by the legislature to submit proposals regarding the future "evolution" of their campus to the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). The HECB was directed under that legislation to review the recommendations from each of the campuses in the context of statewide goals and to present options to the legislature.

Each of the branch campus proposals includes the option of expanding into lower division coursework. The HECB report recommends that the UW-Tacoma and WSU-Vancouver be

allowed to admit freshman and sophomore students. The report also recommends that UW-Bothell and WSU-Tri-Cities be allowed to offer limited lower-division courses that are linked to specific majors.

Applied Baccalaureate Degrees and Regional Access: In June 2004, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) undertook a baccalaureate capacity study that included analysis of statewide and regional demand for upper-division enrollment and review of options and costs for expanding capacity.

One of the study findings was a need to expand applied baccalaureate degree pathways for technical associate degree graduates. Currently, approximately 10 percent of these graduates transfer to a four-year degree program. These include technicians moving from their specialty into management and those planning to work at a more advanced level in their professional or technical specialty. According to the study, fields with demand for an applied baccalaureate degree include: nursing; accounting; engineering, radiologic, and information technology; and management of technology, public safety, and food services.

One option used by other states to meet this need is granting authority to community or technical colleges to award baccalaureate degrees. The SBCTC conducted a review of 23 community colleges in 15 other states, and concluded that Washington should also consider allowing a limited number of community or technical colleges to develop applied baccalaureate degree programs.

NSIS Consortium: Another finding from the SBCTC study was that certain regions of the state remain under-served due to the lack of a four-year campus or university center to provide upper-division capacity.

In 1996, the Legislature directed the HECB to develop a plan for increasing higher education services in the North Snohomish, Island, and Skagit counties area. The HECB recommended that multiple institutions collaborate to provide instruction and degree programs on four community college campuses throughout the region and at one unidentified "hub" location. The City of Everett proposed that the consortium lease space in a new transit station, and the 1999 Legislature authorized funds in the capital budget to enable the consortium to tailor the leased space for educational purposes. Participating institutions began teaching classes at the Everett Station in March 2002.

In the Fall of 2004, 670 students enrolled in classes offered by two community colleges and four universities at the Everett Station. However, most program offerings are for associate degree or master's degree students. There are also several professional certificates offered. It is not possible to complete a bachelor's degree at the Everett Station.

The NSIS is funded by a \$1.96 million appropriation to Western Washington University which acts as the consortium's fiscal agent. Funding covers operating and management costs; it does not include student enrollment

Summary of Amended Bill: Branch Campuses: The top priority for each of the branch campuses is to expand courses and degree programs for transfer and graduate students. New degree programs should be driven by the educational needs and demands of students and the community, as well as the economic development needs of local businesses and employers. Each of the research institutions should ensure the expansion of baccalaureate and graduate

programs under guidelines adopted by the HECB, as well as in accordance with proportionality agreements that emphasize access for transfer students.

The Legislature recognizes various factors that affect costs at branch campuses and intends that, over time, they be funded more similarly to regional universities.

At the UW Tacoma and Bothell, a top priority is expansion of upper-division capacity for transfer students and graduate programs. Beginning in the Fall of 2006, each campus may offer lower-division courses linked to specific majors in fields not addressed at local community colleges. The UW Bothell may, and the UW Tacoma is required to, admit lower-division students in a co-admission or co-enrollment agreement with a community college, or through direct transfer for students who have accumulated about one year of transferable college credits. In addition to the lower division courses linked to specific majors, the campus may directly admit freshmen and sophomore students gradually and deliberately in accordance with the 2004 plan submitted to the HECB. The UW Bothell is also directed to seek additional opportunities to collaborate with Cascadia Community College.

Washington State University Tri-Cities will continue its innovative co-admission and co-enrollment options with Columbia Basin College, and expand its upper-division capacity for transfer students and graduate capacity and programs. The campus will also seek additional opportunities to collaborate with the Pacific Northwest National Laboratories. Beginning in the Fall of 2006, the campus may offer lower-division courses linked to specific majors in fields not addressed at local community colleges. The campus may admit lower-division students in a co-admission or co-enrollment agreement with a community college. In addition to the lower division courses linked to specific majors, the campus may directly admit freshmen and sophomores only for a bachelor's degree in biotechnology. Direct admission of other freshmen and sophomores will be the subject of further study by the HECB.

Washington State University Vancouver is directed to expand upper-division capacity for transfer students and graduate capacity and programs, and continue to collaborate with local community colleges. Beginning in the Fall of 2006, the campus may admit lower-division students directly. By simultaneously admitting lower-division students, increasing transfer enrollment, and expanding graduate and professional programs, WSU Vancouver will develop into a four-year institution serving the Southwest Washington region.

The HECB will monitor and evaluate the addition of lower-division enrollment at the branch campuses and periodically report and make recommendations to the Legislature to ensure the campuses meet the statutory priorities.

Applied Baccalaureate Degrees: Four community or technical college are authorized to offer applied baccalaureate degrees on a pilot basis. The SBCTC selects pilot colleges from those who apply. The SBCTC will convene a task force with members from both community and technical colleges to develop the selection criteria. Minimum criteria for selection include:

- the college has capacity to make a commitment of resources for a high quality program;
- the college has or can readily engage faculty with the necessary qualifications and expertise;
- the college can show demand for the proposed programs from students to make it cost-effective;

- the program fills a gap because it is not offered by a public four-year institution in the area; and
- the college can show that employers demand the level of technical training proposed with the program, making it cost-effective for students to seek the degree.

After being selected, a pilot college can develop the curriculum for an applied baccalaureate degree. The SBCTC and the HECB must give final approval of the degree programs before the college can enroll students in upper-division courses. A pilot college cannot enroll students in upper-division courses before Fall 2006. Tuition for upper-division courses at the pilot colleges cannot exceed tuition at regional universities.

An applied baccalaureate degree is one specifically designed for individuals with an Associate of Applied Science degree in order to maximize the application of their technical credits, and is based on both theoretical and applied knowledge in a technical field.

Community and Technical College Agreements with Four-Year Institutions: The SBCTC, subject to legislative appropriation, will select and allocate funds to three community or technical colleges to enter into an agreement with a four-year institution to offer bachelor's degrees on the college campus. The agreement must be approved by the HECB before taking effect. The selection is based on gaps in service delivery, capacity, and demand for programs.

NSIS Consortium: The Legislature finds that the NSIS consortium has not met the region's access needs for higher education and that the university center model of service delivery, centered on a community college campus with a single point of accountability, has proven more effective in developing degree programs and attracting students. Therefore, the Legislature intends to assign management and leadership responsibility for the NSIS to Everett Community College.

Everett Community College, in collaboration with community and business leaders, other higher education institutions, and the HECB, will develop an educational plan for the region based on the university center model. The plan must provide for projections of student demand, coordinated delivery of lower and upper-division courses, expansion of baccalaureate degree programs and high-demand degrees and certificates, and include a timeline and cost estimates for moving the consortium to the college campus. Recommendations are due to the higher education and fiscal committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2005.

The HECB must define potential outcomes and develop performance measures for expanding access under the bill. A progress report on the outcomes is due to the higher education committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2008.

Bill As Amended By Ways & Means Compared to Bill as Amended by Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: Four community or technical colleges may be chosen to offer pilot applied baccalaureate degrees. The Policy Committee amendment provided for three community colleges and one technical college.

Bill As Amended By Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education Compared to Original Bill: Branch Campus Changes: Language requiring universities to provide for expansion of baccalaureate and graduate programs in accordance with proportionality agreements is added. Clarifying language is added that the direct admission of students at UW Bothell, UW Tacoma, and WSU Tri-Cities is additional authority beyond the authority to offer lower-

division courses linked to specific majors rather than subject to that restriction. Clarification is added that for direct transfer students the student must have approximately one year of transferable college credits.

Applied Baccalaureate Changes: Rather than three pilot community or technical colleges, a total of four pilot colleges are allowed and three must be community colleges and one must be a technical college. In choosing the colleges, the SBCTC must convene a task force that includes members from both the community and technical colleges to develop objective selection criteria.

Community and Technical Colleges Agreements with Four-Year Institutions Changes: Three community or technical college may enter into agreements with four-year institutions or branch campuses to offer baccalaureate degree programs rather than one.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For (Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education): We face some significant challenges in higher education today. We have more students that want access than we have been funding. This bill sends the message that access for transfer students remains the top priority but also recognizes that each campus and each community has unique needs. Other strategies must also be explored beyond the branch campuses for expanding access and that is why this bill includes the pilots for applied baccalaureate programs to be offered at our community or technical colleges and the ability of colleges to contract with the four year institutions for four year degree programs. Additionally, the bill begins to address the access needs of the North Snohomish area. NSIS is a good idea but it needs to be refocused and hopefully this bill will do that. This is not a perfect bill but it is a way to move forward in a positive way. It breaks some new ground. Some will ask where will the money come from, but we need to realize that we must put the structure in place now. If we are going to help the economy of this state and provide an educated workforce we need to take higher education very seriously and this is a way to start moving in that direction. A lack of educational opportunities is a lack of competitive abilities. Our students need the ability to get the education they need to compete in a global market.

The Governor is an advocate for expanding the branch campuses in Tacoma and Vancouver and supports this bill. There is definitely a demand for increased upper and lower division access in those areas. The self-studies done by the campuses and the HECB's recommendations were both very complete and well thought out and the Governor wants to honor that work.

In the city of Tacoma, the private universities support the branch campus and see it as a partner in contributing to the learning community. Tacoma has a large service area and a large number of high school students that will need access to higher education. UW-Tacoma will help contribute to serving the un-met need in Tacoma and Pierce County. No matter how UW-Tacoma grows, access for transfer students will still be a priority, but the campus can also

provide additional service and access. Future growth of the economy in the Puget Sound region depends on access to higher education. We need to keep the best and brightest of our students in the region.

Southwest Washington is the least well served region of the state in terms of higher education access. Our citizens have had to leave the region in order to get the higher education they want and then many times they do not come back. This bill will address the needs of Southwest Washington by letting the Vancouver campus expand. Expansion will not impact our already strong relationships with the community colleges and the access available to transfer students. The Tri-Cities should not be left out of the expansion, there is no justification to not allow freshman or sophomore authority. The reference to a specific type of bachelor's degree is a good choice and is particularly ideal because of the campus' location near the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

The Bothell campus works very closely with the community and technical colleges in the area and is serving transfer students well. However, there are still many students that need access to higher education. This bill would let us serve those students and create another open door for students in this state. The community and the businesses in the area support this expansion.

The business community and labor support allowing community or technical colleges to offer applied baccalaureate degrees. Students in the technical fields need these degrees to compete effectively, to progress in their careers and meet their full potential. All types of colleges must be included in the pilot program and the technical colleges would like to see specific mention of a technical college added into the bill. There must be expanded access for students throughout the entire system.

Testimony Against: (Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education) None.

Who Testified(Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education): PRO: Representative Kenney, prime sponsor; Jane Stein, LWTC Trustee; Walt Wasath, Clover Park College Trustee; Stan Rumbaugh, Bates Technical College Trustee; Trina Malinow, LWTC Student; Valesa Mandwo, LWTC Alumni; Chris German, student; Paul Axtel, LWTC Faculty; Chris Hoffman, CEO Redmond Chamber; Charles Creso, Branch Campus Graduate; Hal Dengerink; Chancellor, WSU-Vancouver; Larry Ganders, WSU; Bruce Botka, Herb Simon, HECB; Jan Yoshiwara, SBCTC; Jan Floten, Bellevue CC; Charlie Earl, Everett CC; Tom Keegan, Peninsula College; Warren Buck, Chancellor, UW-Bothell; Wes Pruitt, Workforce Board; Debora Merle, Governor's Office; Bill Baarsma, Mayor of Tacoma; John Ladenburg, Pierce County Exec.; Dave Graybil, Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce; Dawn Lucien, UW Advisory Board; Steve Olswang, Chancellor, UW-Tacoma; Deborah Knutson, EDC of Snohomish County.

Testimony For (Ways & Means): This legislation represents a balanced approach for adding baccalaureate degree capacity. The HECB supports including the applied baccalaureate pilot programs. The legislature is encouraged to reconcile the policy expressed in E2SHB 1794 with the budget. The HECB is committed to working with the SBCTC on the pilots programs so that no one is surprised by the HECB's decisions on the applications. There are significant access challenges in higher education and doing all things in this bill will help. The SBCTC supports pilot 4-year degrees at 3 community colleges and 1 technical college. The branch

campuses will be very accessible to CTC students. The vast majority of growth at the branches will be in 2plus2 programs.

Testimony Against (Ways & Means): None.

Who Testified (Ways & Means): PRO: Representative Phyllis Kenney, prime sponsor; Bruce Botka, HECB; Randy Hodgins, UW; Jan Yoshiwara, SBCTC.