

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6626

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 4, 2016

Title: An act relating to creating a work group on accelerated baccalaureate degree programs.

Brief Description: Creating a work group on accelerated baccalaureate degree programs.

Sponsors: Senators Bailey, Frockt, Baumgartner, Liias and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/04/16, 2/04/16 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chair; Baumgartner, Vice Chair; Frockt, Ranking Member; Becker, Carlyle, Liias and Miloscia.

Staff: Clint McCarthy (786-7319)

Background: Some public and private colleges and universities offer students the opportunity to obtain a baccalaureate degree in three years. The requirements of these accelerated baccalaureate programs vary. Frequently, these accelerated degree programs require summer school attendance, prior college credits earned during high school through such programs as Advanced Placement and Running Start, or enrollment for the maximum credits allowed per quarter.

The most common model for accelerated baccalaureates in the state of Washington is credit for prior learning. Of students graduating in the Class of 2014, 6 percent completed their degree in three years at Washington's public baccalaureate institutions.

Summary of Bill: The "Degree in Three" workgroup is created to develop a set of institutional best practices to promote student's ability to successfully graduate with a baccalaureate degree within three years at Washington public regional universities and The Evergreen State College (TESC). The workgroup must consist of one representative from each of Washington's regional universities and TESC. The group is directed to develop recommendations that would effectively increase the overall rate of students receiving their baccalaureate degree within three years.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a big initiative at Eastern Washington University. Highly motivated students are expected to participate in a cohort this year. Central Washington University has a long time commitment to assisting students who want to get students through a baccalaureate program in less than four years. Studying best practices could result in getting more students through school in three years. Accelerated degree pathways are an important tool for some students, but not all students.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Alicia Kinne-Clawson, Eastern Washington University; Joe Timmons, Western Washington University; Steve Dupont, Central Washington University.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.