

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5902

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Ways & Means, March 22, 2017

**Title:** An act relating to enrollments in postsecondary certification and degree programs with an emphasis in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

**Brief Description:** Addressing enrollments in postsecondary certification and degree programs with an emphasis in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

**Sponsors:** Senators Braun and Wilson.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Ways & Means: 3/21/17, 3/22/17 [DP, DNP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Specifies the Legislature intends to increase full-time equivalent state-supported resident undergraduate student enrollment at the public institutions of higher education.
- Requires that at least 70 percent of the funding for the increased enrollment must be for enrollments in postsecondary certification and degree programs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Braun, Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Rossi, Vice Chair; Honeyford, Vice Chair, Capital Budget ; Ranker, Ranking Minority Member; Rolfes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member, Operating Budget; Frockt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member, Capital Budget; Bailey, Becker, Billig, Carlyle, Conway, Darneille, Fain, Keiser, Miloscia, Padden, Pedersen, Rivers, Schoesler, Warnick and Zeiger.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Hasegawa.

**Staff:** Michele Alishahi (786-7433)

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*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.*

**Background:** State-Funded Higher Education Enrollment. The Office of Financial Management (OFM) calculates the annual average full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment for state-funded courses for each academic term at the public institutions of higher education.

For the 2015-16 academic year, state-funded average annual FTE enrollments are:

University of Washington	47,089
Washington State University	26,322
Central Washington University	9,389
Eastern Washington University	10,366
The Evergreen State College	3,992
Western Washington University	12,676
Community and Technical Colleges	135,653

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Degrees. Between 2008 and 2014, the percentage of degrees awarded to STEM majors at the state’s public four-year institutions has increased from 20 percent to 29 percent. In 2012, the Legislature reallocated over \$9 million in funding for STEM-related education. Since 2012, the percentage of degrees awarded to STEM majors increased from 23.5 percent to 29 percent. In the 2014-15 school year—the year with the most available data—the state’s public four year institutions awarded 24,885 degrees. Of those 24,855 degrees that were awarded, 7,209 were degrees in STEM fields—29 percent.

Between 2005 and 2015, the percentage of associate degrees awarded to STEM majors at the state’s community and technical colleges (CTCs) has increased from 4 percent to 8 percent. In the 2015-16 school year, the CTCs awarded 17,787 degrees. Of that amount, 1,424 were degrees in STEM fields—8 percent. The overall number of degrees award in STEM has increased by 138 percent from 2005 to 2015.

**Summary of Bill:** Resident Undergraduate Enrollment and STEM. Subject to appropriations, the Legislature intends to increase FTE state-supported resident undergraduate student enrollment at the public institutions of higher education.

At least 70 percent of the funding provided for the increased enrollment must be for enrollments in postsecondary certification and degree programs in STEM.

The remaining 30 percent of the funding must be for enrollments in other areas of study. Unless specified in the Omnibus Operating Appropriations Act, institutions may direct enrollments to other high-demand certification and degree programs that meet the unserved needs of students and employers.

Institutions of Higher Education Reporting. The public institutions are required to work with the Education Research and Data Center to identify these students separately from other enrollments. By September 1st of each year, each institution must report on the cost per student, area of study, and progress toward graduation and degree completion.

The institutions must report to OFM on the number of additional resident undergraduate enrollments achieved with the funds. If enrollment expectations are not achieved, any

unspent funds must lapse. OFM is required to recommend to the Legislature whether funding to that institution should continue or be allocated to another institution.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** OTHER: Increased funding for new enrollments will get some students in the door, but without wrap around services, it will not ensure they will graduate, and that we are making headway along gender, race, and the pay gap. What is so strong about preparation programs like MESA and the Opportunity Scholarship are three things: 1) financial help, 2) mentoring, and 3) academic advising. If you want to see more STEM degrees, I urge you to focus your efforts on financial aid, such as the State Need Grant, support for women, students of color, and on other support programs.

**Persons Testifying:** OTHER: Elissa Goss, Executive Director, Washington Student Association.

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