

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6092

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, January 31, 2020

Title: An act relating to posthumous high school diplomas.

Brief Description: Awarding diplomas posthumously.

Sponsors: Senators Wilson, C., Wellman, Hawkins, Kuderer and Mullet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/20/20, 1/31/20 [DPS].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Requires school districts to issue a high school diploma to a deceased student if the student was academically eligible to graduate or on track to graduate, and died after completing the 11th grade school year.
- Establishes that districts are not required to award a diploma to a deceased student at the same ceremony or event as other graduating students.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6092 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Hunt, Mullet, Padden, Pedersen, Salomon and Wagoner.

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

Background: High School Diplomas. In order to graduate from high school, a student must satisfy graduation requirements set by the State Board of Education (SBE), satisfy credit requirements, complete a High School and Beyond Plan, and meet the requirements of a graduation pathway. In addition, a student must meet any additional requirements set by the student's public high school or school district.

Upon students' satisfactory completion of all local and state graduation requirements, school districts must issue diplomas to students signifying graduation from high school.

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.

In 2002, the Legislature gave districts the ability to issue a high school diploma to certain groups of veterans of the armed forces, including to an individual on behalf of a deceased veteran.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): At the request of the parent, guardian, or custodian, a school district must issue a high school diploma to a deceased student if the student:

- was enrolled in a public school in the district at the time of death;
- was academically eligible to graduate or on track to graduate; and
- died after completing the 11th grade school year.

The high school diploma may not be issued before the graduation date of the class in which the student was enrolled. Districts are not required to award the diploma at the same ceremony or event as other students.

The act will be known as Evitan's Law.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Specifies that the section does not limit retroactivity.
- Establishes that posthumous diplomas shall not count toward student graduation counts or for federal and state accountability purposes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 13, 2020.

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 on Proposed Substitute: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: The bill clarifies for districts what their role could be in supporting families who have lost a young person. Certificates of participation are not the same as a high school diploma. Giving diplomas to students who passed away is justice and fair treatment to the families that have lost loved ones, and should be available to more individuals than just veterans.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Claire Wilson, Prime Sponsor; Clysta Cole, citizen; Autymn Wilde, State Board of Education.

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