

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2697

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Higher Education*

Title: An act relating to higher education building fees.

Brief Description: Providing for increased building security on the campuses of the public institutions of higher education.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Schmidt and Paris.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, February 6, 1992, DP.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HIGHER EDUCATION**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 12 members: Representatives Jacobsen, Chair; Ogden, Vice Chair; Wood, Ranking Minority Member; May, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Dellwo; Fraser; Ludwig; Miller; Sheldon; Spanel; and Van Luven.

Staff: James Thurston (786-7349).

Background: There is an increasing awareness of the level of criminal activity on college campuses nationally and here in Washington. This knowledge has focussed growing attention on issues of personal security at institutions of higher education. During the 1989-90 session, the Legislature required Washington public colleges and universities to provide each new student and employee with information about campus safety policies and procedures. In the same act, the Legislature required each public institution to publish campus crime statistics and report them to the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs. Each institution is also required to establish a task force to annually examine campus security and safety issues.

Currently, each institution of higher education in Washington, except the technical colleges, collects a building fee as part of the tuition it charges students. The building fees are fixed at a dollar amount in statute. The amount varies by institution type and student type. The

building fees are paid into the state treasury and are credited to institutional accounts. The fees are used for buildings, maintenance, and bond retirement. The current building fee dollar amounts have not been changed since 1981.

Summary of Bill: Building fees are increased by \$5 for every type of student at every institution currently collecting the fees. To improve personal security on the campus from which the fee was collected, \$5 of each building fee are to be used exclusively for facility upgrades.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Criminal activity on higher education campuses is a problem in Washington. There is a lack of action and interest in addressing student and employee security needs at some institutions. Those institutions need to be further motivated to work with students and the campus community on issues of safety and security.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Schmidt, prime sponsor.