

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1192

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Higher Education*

Title: An act relating to single parents in higher education.

Brief Description: Helping single parents obtain a higher education.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Ogden, Jacobsen, Prentice, Wood, Fraser, H. Myers, Winsley, Paris, Van Luven, Dellwo, Jones, Wang, Roland, R. Johnson, Riley, Scott, Phillips, Brekke, Inslee, Spanel, Leonard and Anderson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Higher Education, March 4, 1991, 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: Susan Hosch (786-7120).

Background: In October of 1989, Dr. Beverly Purrington, a nationally recognized expert on single parents in higher education, reported the results of her research to the Higher Education Subcommittee on Access. In her presentation, Dr. Purrington described a study commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation. The study described programs that help single parents succeed in college.

According to the study, single parents need safe and affordable child care and housing, and enough resources to provide basic health care for their children. College and university programs that attempt to assist single parents should recognize the primary nature of those needs.

Another crucial need is information. But, because single parents are time-poor, they need coordinated or consolidated services, preferably at one location. Finally, single

parents need emotional and academic support. Peer advising seems to be the best way of providing this type of support.

Dr. Purrington recommended that Washington establish a statewide program to assist single parents in higher education. The program should include a statewide coordinator to help individual colleges and universities create cost-effective programs using existing resources. The program should also include a research component to track single parents and evaluate program outcomes.

Finally, the program should build on existing programs and establish partnerships among businesses, educational institutions, and social service agencies.

Summary of Bill: The Higher Education Coordinating Board will administer a pilot program designed to help single parents obtain a higher education. The board will appoint an advisory committee to help design the program and select projects to be funded. Through a competitive process, the board will then select pilot projects, and later disseminate their results to colleges and universities. Public and accredited independent institutions are eligible to participate in the program.

Pilot projects will be selected based on criteria and priorities outlined in the legislation. The criteria emphasize collaborative efforts that help single parents to meet a variety of unmet needs. The criteria also emphasize outreach, resource and referral services, and research components that include tracking student progress and outcomes. Priority will be given to innovative collaborative projects that meet the most unmet needs.

The act expires on June 30, 1999.

Appropriated to the Higher Education Coordinating Board for the 1991-93 biennium is \$500,000.

An emergency clause is attached.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Appropriation: Yes.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: Many single parents lack objective information on how to access Washington's system of higher education. As a result, some of those who do enroll in colleges or proprietary schools end up entering

inappropriate programs. Others fail to enroll at all. Single parents need objective information on financial aid, career options, and educational opportunities. They also need to have institutions of higher education become sensitized to their needs, especially in the areas of child care, dependable resources, time management, and financial aid. Some single parents also need to have housing and child care close to campus. It would be ideal if state and local agencies and organizations would begin working collaboratively to meet the needs of this expanding population.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Dr. Elizabeth Keeler, Helping Ourselves Means Education (HOME); Lonnie Johns-Brown, National Association of Social Workers; Ann Simons, Washington Women United; and Dan Lambert, Washington Association of Community College Students.