

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**ESHB 1870**

**AS OF MARCH 26, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Providing higher education opportunities for people in economically depressed timber regions.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Jones, Basich, Hargrove, Jacobsen, Riley, Fuhrman, R. Johnson, Wilson, Wineberry, Morris, Miller, Wynne, Wood, D. Sommers, Roland, Brumsickle, Rasmussen, Sprenkle and Orr).

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Staff:** Laura Farris (786-7784)

**Hearing Dates:** March 27, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

Declines in the federal timber supply will have a significant economic impact on the state of Washington. Most of the job losses will occur in rural, timber dependent counties which have not experienced economic growth similar to the metropolitan areas. Generally, the impacted regions of the state do not have the economic diversity of the rest of the state. Furthermore, their isolation from transportation corridors and metropolitan centers reduces the opportunity for diversification. Impacted workers in timber dependent communities are also more likely to be older and have less formal education than other dislocated workers.

Community colleges located in timber dependent communities currently offer training in basic skills, career planning and vocational programs that are beneficial to displaced timber workers. Community colleges also have strong guidance programs to assist in career planning. Those services are currently provided within the enrollment limits of the community college. As the numbers of dislocated timber workers rise, the percentage of those who are unable to enroll in community colleges will also increase. Recent estimates predict a 14 percent unemployment rate in Grays Harbor due to declining timber supply. The projected unemployment rate in Clallam County is 13 percent.

**SUMMARY:**

The State Board for Community College Education shall administer a program for dislocated timber workers. The board shall distribute funds to community colleges, appoint an advisory committee, and monitor the program.

The State Board for Community College Education is allocated 250 additional full-time equivalent students in the fiscal year 1992, and 500 full-time equivalent students in the fiscal year 1993. The tuition, services and activities fees are waived for dislocated timber workers or their spouses enrolled as one of the additional full-time equivalent students authorized in the legislation. Displaced timber workers or their spouses receive first priority for the additional allocation provided in the legislation.

The student eligibility criteria is outlined. A timber worker is eligible if, within the past five years, the worker was employed in the timber industry on a full-time basis for at least six months each year, and if loss of employment is due to reduction in work force.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board shall administer a program designed to provide upper division higher education opportunities to dislocated timber workers. The board shall distribute funding for an institution of higher education to provide classes in Clallam County.

The board shall contract with an institution of higher education to provide upper division classes to serve 50 full-time equivalent students per year in Clallam County. The institution shall waive the tuition, service and activities fees for dislocated workers or their spouses, enrolled as one of the additional full-time equivalent students authorized in the legislation. Others in the timber dependent community may pay tuition and fees for the remaining space available.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** available

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