

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5184

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SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED

Brief Description: Creating a work force training and education coordinating board, and combining community and vocational-technical schools under one agency.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Saling, Bauer, Thorsness, Jesernig, Stratton, Talmadge and Snyder; by request of Governor Gardner).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

BACKGROUND:

A number of studies have concluded that changes are necessary in both state and national policy to improve workforce education and training. The United States Department of Labor's 1987 study, "Workforce 2000," pointed to the demographic shifts that will mean greater diversity in the workforce and a requirement for the workforce as a whole to be more highly trained. "Washington Works Worldwide," the 1988 report of the Washington Economic Development Board, pointed to the critical need for a well-trained workforce in terms of the state's competition in a global economy. In June of 1990, the National Center on Education and the Economy's Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce produced a report, "America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages," which underscores the work of the preceding reports and makes a number of bold recommendations for change. Basic to the conclusions of this report is the belief that the organization of work must move beyond the mass production model.

As the citizens of Washington move into the next century, they will require technical skills and vocational training as well as critical thinking skills if they are to help the state compete in that global economy. The Governor's Advisory Council on the Investment in Human Capital was created in 1990. The primary mission is to improve state policies for workforce education and training to meet shifting demographic and economic imperatives. Due to legislative concern about the fragmentation of the training system, the council was asked to recommend an agency to govern all postsecondary vocational education and the first two years of higher education not under the jurisdiction of a four-year college or university.

In 1990 the Office of Financial Management (OFM) was directed to administer a study of the state's training and retraining system that would provide the supporting data for the council's recommendations. Among the findings of the study are the following conclusions:

- (1) The workforce is changing. It is growing more slowly and contains fewer young people. In addition, 40 percent of the net increase in Washington's workforce between now and 2010 will come from minority populations and approximately 53 percent will be women.
- (2) A shortage of well-trained workers is already hurting the state.
- (3) Many employers are unsatisfied with employee skills--both basic and technical. Eighty percent of all firms that hire workers with specialized technical skills have had difficulty finding qualified workers.
- (4) The level of training that is most needed is vocational/technical training.
- (5) Needs of target populations are not being met: functionally illiterate; dislocated workers; economically disadvantaged; people with disabilities; minority population.
- (6) More support services are needed, including but not limited to day care, financial aid, career counseling, etc.
- (7) The private sector alone cannot provide worker training. One-half of employers report lack of resources to provide training.
- (8) Public programs are fragmented. Accountability and responsibility cannot be placed in one agency. Poor data collection is a problem for both business and labor. There are no common definitions for data collection or other purposes.
- (9) Vocational education has a poor image in the United States. European models provide educational standards that all students must meet. Work-based learning of the apprenticeship-type has proven effective.

The Governor's Advisory Council on the Investment in Human Capital made recommendations covering nine major areas. These include creating a coordinating structure for vocational training, improving accountability, consolidating governance of programs for the adult workforce, and expanding apprenticeship programs. The council also recommended enhancing the following: literacy and basic skills programs, K-12 workforce programs, access to and funding for training programs, and efforts to recruit and train workers from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

SUMMARY:

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board is created as the successor agency to the State Board for Vocational Education. The new board will have nine voting members. Six members, three each from business and labor, will be selected by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The Governor shall seek to ensure diversity and balance by the appointment of persons with disabilities, as well as ethnic, gender and geographical distribution. The Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Executive Director of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Commissioner of Employment Security will be ex-officio voting members. A nonvoting chair shall be a person of vision appointed by the Governor.

The director of the board shall be appointed by the Governor from a list (or lists) of three names submitted by a committee made up of the business and labor members of the board. The Governor may dismiss the director only with the approval of a majority vote of the board. The board, by a majority vote, may dismiss the director with the approval of the Governor.

With the cooperation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Employment Security Department, the coordinating board shall develop a consistent and reliable data base. The coordinating board shall be primarily for planning, policy development and coordination. The coordinating board is responsible for administering the private vocational school act.

The coordinating board shall monitor the need for federally mandated councils: The Washington State Job Training Coordinating Council (SJTCC) and the Washington State Council on Vocational Education (COVE), as well as the Washington Advisory Council on Adult Education. There will be overlapping membership on the SJTCC to the maximum extent feasible. One service delivery area (SDA) administrator and one private industry council (PIC) representative shall be voting members of the SJTCC.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges shall have nine members with at least two from eastern Washington. Membership must include geographical diversity and one representative of labor and one representative of business. Programs and activities offered in the last year will continue so long as the need exists. The state board shall provide or coordinate apprenticeship programs.

The five vocational-technical institutes under the jurisdiction of the common school system are renamed and transferred to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. A separate five-member board of trustees is created for each of the five technical colleges: Bates Technical College, Clover Park Technical College, Bellingham Technical College, Lake Washington Technical College, and Renton Technical College. Local board membership shall include one

member from business and one member from labor. There shall be a separate district for each technical college. A coordinating mechanism is provided for overlapping college districts. In Pierce County there will be an eight-member coordinating committee which includes two trustees from each college, responsible for regional planning. The coordinating committee shall not employ its own staff. Agreements for associate degrees are required in Pierce County, while in Whatcom County transfer courses will be offered only by the community college.

School districts sending students to the vocational-technical institutes may continue to send students to the technical colleges. High school students shall continue to be served by the technical college in the proportion as in school year 1989-90. The technical colleges may offer high school level nonvocational courses.

Technical colleges may buy support services from school districts by mutual agreement. Technical colleges are to offer nonbaccalaureate degrees under state board rules. Playgrounds will continue to be available. The \$5,000 bid limit is increased to \$15,000. Faculty senates shall be optional for the colleges.

Retirement and benefit options are clarified. SPI employees are transferred to the higher education personnel system. Bargaining laws are revised to include the technical college instructors. Contracts due to expire will continue until the board of trustees can negotiate a new contract, or for one year, or longer by agreement. VTI/school district personnel are protected from retribution due to the act. VTI employees will not be given termination notices. On March 1, 1991, VTI directors become presidents of technical colleges.

Buildings used temporarily by a VTI and buildings already returned revert to the school district. VTIs stay with the school districts until September 1991. Liabilities are transferred with assets. No asset removal is allowed; no increase in direct costs is allowed--everyone must cooperate. Decisions regarding asset transfers are made in consultation with SPI, the state board, and a task force appointed by the Governor. If no agreement is reached, then the Governor will decide. Licenses are transferred with other papers. School districts are obligated only for bonds already issued.

Statutes pertaining to the Washington Institute of Applied Technology are repealed. The institute is renamed the Seattle Vocational Institute and becomes the fourth unit of the Seattle Community College District. The powers, duties, and functions of the Institute are transferred to the Seattle Community College District. The mission is clarified, staff is transferred and some faculty may be hired.

All literacy programs are transferred to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. SPI is directed to develop a curriculum that integrates vocational and academic coursework.

VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:

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|--------|----|----|----------------------------|
| Senate | 32 | 17 | |
| House | 90 | 7 | (House amended) |
| Senate | | | (Senate refused to concur) |
| House | | | (House refused to recede) |
| Senate | | | (Senate refused to concur) |
| House | 93 | 4 | (House amended) |
| Senate | 30 | 16 | (Senate concurred) |

EFFECTIVE: July 28, 1991