

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 6501

---

---

### C 46 L 04

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Regarding instructional materials for students with disabilities at public and private institutions of higher education.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Carlson, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Jacobsen, Schmidt, Rasmussen, Shin, Winsley and McAuliffe; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges).

**Senate Committee on Higher Education**

**House Committee on Higher Education**

**Background:** Providing instructional materials in specialized formats for students with print access disabilities is a challenge facing coordinators of services for students with disabilities. Under current federal and state law, Washington State's public and private higher education institutions must ensure that students with disabilities receive the appropriate services necessary to provide equal access. However, the tools available to translate instructional material into specialized formats are often cumbersome, costly and time-consuming.

Many publishers understand this and support students' work by providing electronically formatted instructional materials. Response to students' need remains at the pleasure of publishing firms, and response is varied. Electronic versions are readily available for textbooks and instructional materials – in fact, these files are created as part of the manufacturing process.

**Summary:** Publishers or manufacturers of instructional materials used by students attending public or private higher education institutions in the state of Washington must provide any instructional material in a mutually agreed upon electronic format at no additional cost and in a timely manner to a postsecondary institution upon receipt of a written request. The written request certifies a real need by the institution and the student to be served.

Instructional material, print access disability, structural integrity, and specialized format are defined. Copyrights are protected and exceptions are allowed when the technology is not available. Failure to comply is a violation under the state law against discrimination.

### **Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	48	0	
House	94	0	
House	96	0	(House reconsidered)

**Effective:** June 10, 2004