

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1394

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to training medical students to work with patients with developmental disabilities.

Brief Description: Requiring a plan to encourage medical students to work with patients with developmental disabilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Williams, Roach, O'Brien, Hurst, Ormsby, Chase and Simpson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/12/07, 2/26/07 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Provides that, subject to appropriation, grants may be available to students or faculty at the University of Washington School of Medicine (School of Medicine) for research or training projects that focus on improving services to individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Requires the School of Medicine to report to the Legislature regarding grants awarded and progress in related areas.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Wallace, Chair; Sells, Vice Chair; Anderson, Ranking Minority Member; Buri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hasegawa, Jarrett, McIntire, Roberts and Sommers.

Staff: Andrew Colvin (786-7304).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The University of Washington School of Medicine (School of Medicine) provides publicly supported medical education to students studying and training to become medical doctors. The School of Medicine is responsible for the design, implementation, and evaluation of its curriculum. Accreditation of the School's educational program falls under the authority of the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, which the United States Department of Education recognizes as being responsible for the accreditation of programs of medical education in the United States and Canada leading to the M.D. degree.

Some research has suggested that people with developmental disabilities have greater difficulty accessing health care that meets their unique needs. For example, a 2005 report by Special Olympics, Inc. concluded that physicians, dentists, and other health professionals do not receive adequate training to treat individuals with intellectual disabilities. Within the last few years, reports from the Surgeon General of the United States have also found a need to increase training among health care professionals to address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Subject to the appropriation of funds for the purpose, the School of Medicine may award grants to students or faculty for research or training projects focused on the improvement of medical services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

The School of Medicine must report to the Legislature by December 2007 regarding grants that have been awarded and progress in related areas.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill eliminates the requirement that the University of Washington develop and present to the Legislature a plan to train students to work with patients with disabilities. Instead, if the Legislature appropriates funds for the purpose, grants may be available to students or faculty for research or training projects that focus on improving services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void if not funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Individuals with developmental disabilities often have a difficult time finding doctors or other medical professionals that can address their unique needs. For children, it is sometimes easier to find pediatricians who have training and knowledge, but it is much more

difficult for adults. This sometimes requires that an individual travel to another town or city to find medical care. Access becomes an issue for those with developmental disabilities because there are fewer medical professionals that have training in this area to provide services. The School of Medicine agrees that this is an important issue and that more training would be a good thing, but believes that incentive grants provides a better approach to the issue.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Williams, prime sponsor; Terri Anderson, Voice of the Retarded; Maureen Durkan, Action; Jerry Willette, Fircrest School District; and Jackie Der, University of Washington School of Medicine.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.