

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2523

As Reported by House Committee On:

Education

Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

Title: An act relating to creation of the position of world language supervisor.

Brief Description: Creating the position of world language supervisor in the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

Sponsors: Representatives Hudgins, Schual-Berke, Hasegawa, Roberts, Goodman, Kenney, Santos, Chase and Quall.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/18/08, 1/29/08 [DPS];

Appropriations Subcommittee on Education: 2/5/08 [DP2S(w/o sub ED)].

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to assign a full-time staff person to serve as world language supervisor and describes the supervisor's duties.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Haigh, Liias, Santos and Sullivan.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Roach.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

Instruction in world languages is not a state high school graduation requirement in Washington, although students seeking admission to one of the state's public four-year

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institutions of higher education must take two years of the same foreign language, Native American language, or American Sign Language. Washington's Essential Academic Learning Requirements do not cover world languages. However, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has endorsed, for voluntary use, standards for world language instruction adopted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The OSPI does not currently have a staff position dedicated to world languages.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The OSPI must assign at least one full-time staff as the world language supervisor. The supervisor's duties are to:

- develop and conduct professional development for teachers;
- provide technical assistance to schools and advise in the development of online courses;
- secure and implement grants and implement memoranda of understanding with foreign ministries of education;
- foster an articulated curriculum through elementary, secondary, and postsecondary grades;
- establish and maintain a database on course offerings in public schools;
- serve as an education liaison and advisor; and
- coordinate with existing world language resources at the college and universities.

There is specific note made that provisions relating to the world language supervisor do not relate to the first peoples' languages or affect the first peoples' teacher certification program.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill changes the intent section to remove the reference to trade dependency. It also adds findings that many local jobs are tied to the global economy and that the state can leverage its local diversity and better compete in the global economy through world language programs in school.

Changes were made with respect to the duties of the world language supervisor. The world language supervisor is no longer charged with the duty to create a clearinghouse of information and materials. An additional duty is added, requiring the supervisor to coordinate with existing resources at colleges and universities. Modifications were made regarding the supervisor's duties with respect to memoranda of understanding and assistance with visa applications for visiting teachers.

There is specific note made that provisions relating to the world language supervisor do not relate to the first peoples' languages or affect the first peoples' teacher certification program.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The population in Washington is very diverse and there may be 100 languages spoken in a single school district. If Washington's citizens, especially its school children, do not speak other languages, the opportunity to trade with other countries may be lessened or lost. The schools need one point of contact in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction so that each school does not have to reinvent the wheel. Being fluent in other languages increases employment opportunities. As well as being an economic development issue, this is also an equity issue, since the four-year institutions of higher education require two years of foreign language instruction but many of our secondary schools do not offer that opportunity to their students. With a world language supervisor in place, Washington may become eligible for many federal grants.

(With concerns) The tribes and tribal governments should not feel like this is a mandate from the state with respect to first peoples' languages.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Hudgins, prime sponsor; Lauren Kiolet, Washington Association for Language Teaching; Isabel Munoz-Colon, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Michele Anciaux Aoki, Washington State Coalition for International Education.

(With concerns) Suzi Wright, Tulalip Tribes.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass and do not pass the substitute bill by Committee on Education. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Sullivan, Vice Chair; Barlow, Fromhold, Hunter, Jarrett, Kagi, Kenney, Ormsby, Quall, Seaquist and Wallace.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Crouse, Haler, Herrera and Springer.

Staff: Ben Rarick (786-7349).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Subcommittee on Education Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Education:

A null and void clause was added, making the bill null and void unless funded in the budget.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Second Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a bill we've heard before. Last year it got all the way to the Governor; however, it has never received funding. It's a very important bill given the proliferation of foreign languages in our public schools. Data from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) suggests that our supply of qualified foreign language teachers is actually decreasing. The higher education system usually has foreign language requirements for college entrance. This bill is endorsed by every language association imaginable. It is also supported by the Washington Roundtable and Partnership for Learning. Several changes have been made to the bill, including reducing the requirements of the OSPI in terms of creating the world languages clearinghouse, and also made some language changes to accommodate the concerns of the tribes. Dr. Bergeson feels this is an important piece of legislation. This was part of the the OSPI's budget request to the Governor. We need to garner additional funds from the federal government and a supervisor for world languages will help us access those funds. Despite the huge increase in volume of J1 visas for visiting teachers; we are only able to support a minimum number of these staff. We have a quota of 50 J1 visas, but we would be in a position to increase that. Currently the OSPI issues only eight or nine but could at least meet the 50 quota and perhaps expand beyond that with more staffing support. The federal language assistance program is one example of that. Also, the world language supervisor position existed in 1993 and was abolished. It was a funding issue at the time.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Caleb Perkins and Isabel Munoz-Colon, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.