

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2918

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to an interstate compact on educational opportunity for military children.

Brief Description: Enacting the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

Sponsors: Representatives Wallace, Chase, Fromhold, Sells, Appleton, Darneille, Rolfes, Kelley, Green, VanDeWege and Conway.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/25/08, 2/1/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes a taskforce to study the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children and report to the Legislature whether it is in the state's interest to adopt it.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Liias, Roach, Santos and Sullivan.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

Interstate compacts are contracts between two or more states creating agreements on how to address particular policy issues, setting standards, or establishing cooperation on regional or national matters. Washington is a party to 22 interstate compacts. Most of these address corrections issues, such as offender supervision and treatment of juveniles, and natural

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.

resource issues, such as the Columbia Gorge, Pacific Fisheries, and radioactive waste disposal.

Washington has been a party to at least one education compact. Adopted in 1969, the Interstate Agreement on Qualifications of Educational Personnel is framed in discretionary rather than mandatory terms and anticipates contract negotiation between the states. The agreement provides that the Superintendent of Public Instruction "may" make one or more contracts with other states providing for the acceptance of educational personnel and then only with the approval of the specific text of the contract by the Professional Educator Standards Board.

How compacts come to be varies. In some cases, interested states send delegates to a work group to develop the compact terms. This might be at the agency level or at the legislative level. For example, HB 1038 (2007) established a task force with legislators and Governor-appointed members to negotiate a compact on electrical transmission corridors.

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children was developed by a group that included the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Education, national education associations, and representatives of several states. Washington was not a participant in developing the Military Children Compact.

Washington is one of eight states in which a measure has been introduced to adopt the Military Children Compact. No states have adopted it as of this date.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A taskforce is established to study the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children and make recommendations to the Legislature by December 1, 2008, on whether it is in the state's best interest to adopt the compact. The taskforce is to be appointed by the Governor. Members include the Attorney General or his designee, the Superintendent of Public Instruction or her designee, a superintendent from a school district with a high concentration of military children, a representative from each Educational Service District, and a representative from the State Board of Education. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must staff the taskforce.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Rather than enacting the compact, a taskforce is established to study the compact and make recommendations by December 1, 2008, on whether it is in the state's best interest to adopt the compact.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 19, 2008.

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) Washington has the seventh largest number of active military in the nation. Eight states are considering adoption of the compact at this time and up to 20 states are expected to do so in the near future. The compact addresses transition issues that military families face. Students who are active in activities and sports in the school they had to leave find it difficult to participate in those same activities in the new school because they often arrive after deadlines have passed. This issue is appropriate for an interstate compact rather than for Congress. Efforts were made in drafting the compact to minimize intrusion upon state law.

(Concerns) While it is important to make school transitions for military children as easy as possible, it is also important to know, before it is enacted, what effect this compact will have upon current state law. In the case of the adult offender compact entered into by the state a few years ago, the Legislature first appointed a taskforce to study the compact and make recommendations to the Legislature as to whether it would be in the state's best interest to adopt it. It is important to understand the legal and fiscal ramifications before entering into the compact.

(Neutral) There are many military persons with families stationed at Fort Lewis. On average, one third of U.S. Army families move each year.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Wallace, prime sponsor; Val Amador, 17th Fires Brigade Fort Lewis; and Rick Mastens, Council of State Governments.

(Concerns) Isabel Munoz-Colon, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

(Neutral) Cindy Murphy, United States Army.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.