

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2917

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 27, 2008

Title: An act relating to voter registration and informational activities at institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Regarding voter registration and informational activities at institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: House Committee on Apps Subcom GG (originally sponsored by Representatives Upthegrove, Warnick, Wallace, Hasegawa, Roberts and Liias).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/18/08, 62-33.

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/27/08 [DPA]

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Shin, Chair; Kilmer, Vice Chair; Delvin, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Schoesler and Sheldon.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: In all counties, the county auditors are charged with ensuring that mail-in voter registration forms are readily available to the public. These forms are provided to city and town clerks, state offices, schools, fire stations, public libraries, and other locations considered appropriate by the county auditors or the Secretary of State. Institutions of higher education (institutions) must have prompts on the websites that ask students if they wish to register to vote.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments): Institutions make voter registration forms available in prominent places on campus; develop and implement policies regarding the distribution of voter registration forms at the beginning of each term and in campus housing facilities; and collaborate with the student government associations to conduct nonpartisan voter information activities.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments): County auditors are no longer assigned the specific duty of providing mail-in registration forms on campuses.

Appropriation: None.

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.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute Bill: PRO: There has been a 22 percent increase in voter registration for the 18-24 year old age group. Students want more information about issues and voter registration. Partnership between the Secretary of State and student governments will help create more responsible voters. This effort dovetails with the Secretary of State's College Civics Program.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jake Stillwell, Washington Student Lobby; Shane Hamlin, Secretary of State's Office.