

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5104

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 1, 2007
Ways & Means, February 19, 2007

Title: An act relating to the applied baccalaureate degree pilot program.

Brief Description: Expanding the applied baccalaureate degree pilot program.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Tom, Rockefeller, Shin, Oemig, Berkey, Brandland, Fairley, Pflug, Delvin, Rasmussen, Kohl-Welles, Keiser, Zarelli, Prentice, Eide, Kline, Hobbs, Clements and Kilmer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/31/07, 2/01/07 [DPS-WM].
Ways & Means: 2/12/07, 2/19/07 [DPS(HIE)].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5104 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5104 as recommended by Committee on Higher Education be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Operating Budget; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell, Fairley, Hatfield, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Rasmussen, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Tom.

Staff: Tim Yowell (786-7435)

Background: In 2005, the Legislature authorized four applied baccalaureate degree pilot programs at community or technical colleges. Six colleges submitted proposals. Bellevue Community College, Olympic College, Peninsula College, and South Seattle Community College were selected as sites for the pilot projects. Upper division students will begin these programs in the fall of 2007.

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 State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) selected the participating institutions based upon: their capacity to commit resources, their ability to engage faculty to develop and deliver the curriculum, the demand for the programs in their service area, the cost-effectiveness for students, and whether the program filled a gap in options offered by a public four-year institution in the geographic area.

Summary of Bill: By February 2008, the SBCTC must select up to two technical colleges to develop and offer programs of study leading to an applied baccalaureate degree. The same criteria for selection will be utilized. Students may not enroll in upper division courses before the fall of 2009.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED SUBSTITUTE AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Higher Education): The pilot program includes two new colleges, at least one of which must be a technical college.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2007.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Higher Education): PRO: There is a need for an option at technical colleges for students who use them as a pathway to more education. Technical college students are an often overlooked resource for Washington employers. This is an important component in bridging the bachelor's degree gap. The original bill appears restrictive, but the proposed substitute allows for needed flexibility. We must acknowledge that ultimate accreditation of these programs requires approval at multiple levels. We need to keep in mind that often it is desirable to evaluate the results of pilot programs before expanding them. This model is being successfully implemented in other states already. The programs promote degrees in high demand fields of study and they coordinate well with Washington Learns.

Persons Testifying (Higher Education): PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; John Walstrum, President, Clover Park Technical College; Mike Metke, Lake Washington Technical College; Jan Yoshiwara, SBCTC; Chris Thompson, Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means): PRO: Our state has a shortage of four-year degrees and of degrees in technical fields. Enabling the community and technical colleges to offer applied bachelors degrees is a cost-effective way to address that gap. Earning a four-year degree at a community or technical college enables working adults to pursue a degree evenings and weekends while continuing to work; it reduces or eliminates the risk that some of the credits they have earned at the community or technical college won't count toward their four-year degree; and it leverages the hundreds of millions of dollars of capital investments that have been made in the community and technical colleges by making still more use of them during evenings and weekends.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; Jan Yoshiwara, SBCTC; Mike Metke, Lake Washington Technical College.