

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5609

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 14, 2007

Title: An act relating to health care eligibility for part-time academic employees of community and technical colleges.

Brief Description: Modifying health care eligibility provisions for part-time academic employees of community and technical colleges.

Sponsors: Senators Murray, Kohl-Welles, Clements and Shin; by request of Health Care Authority.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/12/07, 2/14/07 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: In the fall of 2003, part-time faculty comprised 66 percent of the faculty at Washington's public two-year institutions. Part-time academic employees at community and technical colleges are currently eligible for full health care benefits beginning the second consecutive quarter of employment, at half-time or more. They are also eligible for health benefits through the summer, even if they receive no work that quarter, if they have worked half-time or more of an academic workload in three of the four preceding quarters.

Summary of Bill: Summer quarter is no longer within the definition of academic year. Part-time faculty are eligible for health benefits through the summer, even if they receive no work that quarter, if they have worked half-time or more of an academic workload in each of the three, instead of three of the four, preceding quarters. It is specified that the preceding two academic years should be used to determine a part-time employees average workload (previously unspecified). Once a part-time academic employee establishes eligibility for employer contributions for benefits, those contributions continue if the employee works at least two of the three quarters of the academic year.

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: PRO: This bill corrects statutory language so that it conforms to current practice. We ask a lot from part-time faculty and this helps ensure equitable treatment.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Murray, prime sponsor; Mary Fliss, Health Care Authority; John Boesenberg, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Wendy Rader-Konafalski, Washington Education Association.