

SENATE BILL REPORT

SCR 8403

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 8, 2007

Brief Description: Creating a joint select committee concerning Latino accessibility to higher education.

Sponsors: Senator Jacobsen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/07/07, 2/08/07 [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 2004-05, over half of the 10th grade Washington students met the statewide standards in reading and writing and over 47 percent met the statewide standards in mathematics. Hispanic students lag behind their peers in achievement of these standards. The standards are an important factor because they determine whether a student can begin college-level work. A 2003 study found that only 45 percent of Hispanic high school graduates went on to attend college.

Summary of Bill: A joint select committee on Latino accessibility to higher education is established. The committee consists of four members of the Senate and four members from the House of Representatives who must consult with the Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs. The committee will study: methods of closing the information gap about challenges facing the Latino community, including the cost and accessibility of higher education; ways to provide appropriate financial aid; and improvement of articulation between institutions of higher education on issues important to the Latino community. The committee will develop strategies for helping Latino students achieve at high academic levels. The committee reports its findings to the 2009 Legislature.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: A participation rate of 45 percent in higher education is a tragedy. We are underutilizing a resource of the state. Families are working full-time to survive with no money left to help their children access higher education.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Julio Quam, Executive Director, Centro Latino.