

SENATE BILL REPORT

SCR 8412

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, January 28, 2008

Brief Description: Requesting approval of the statewide strategic master plan for higher education.

Sponsors: Senators Kilmer, Schoesler and Rockefeller.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/16/08, 1/28/08 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8412 be substituted therefor, and the substitute concurrent resolution do pass.

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

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Every four years, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (Board) is required to submit an update of the ten-year statewide strategic master plan for higher education (plan) to the Governor and the Legislature. The plan presents the vision, goals, priorities, and strategies in a way that provides guidance for institutions, the Governor, and the Legislature to make further decisions regarding institution-level plans, policies, legislation, and operating and capital funding for higher education. In the plan, the Board is required to recommend specific actions to be taken and identify measurable performance indicators and benchmarks for gauging progress toward achieving the goals and priorities. The updated plan reflects the expectations and policy directions of the legislative higher education and fiscal committees, and provides a timely and relevant framework for the development of future budgets and policy proposals.

In developing the plan, the Board collaborates with the four-year institutions of higher education including the Council of Presidents, the community and technical college system, and, when appropriate, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the independent higher education institutions, the business sector, and labor. The Board also seeks input from students, faculty organizations, community and business leaders in the state, members of the Legislature, and the Governor. The Legislature, by concurrent resolution, approves or recommends changes to the updated plan following public hearings. The Board then submits the final plan, incorporating

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legislative changes, to the Governor and the Legislature by June of the year in which the Legislature approves the concurrent resolution. The plan then becomes state higher education policy unless legislation is enacted to alter the policies in the plan.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The Senate and the House of Representatives approve the update to the statewide strategic master plan for higher education. The Board is directed to actively involve the four-year institutions of higher education, the community and technical college system, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, students, faculty, public school teachers, community and business leaders in the state, members of the Legislature, and the Office of Financial Management in refining next steps required to implement the plan. The Board must report implementation progress to the appropriate legislative committees by February 1, 2009.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Public school teachers are added to the group involved in refining the next steps to implement the plan.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: This plan represents an extraordinary collaboration among the stakeholder groups. Many more stakeholders were consulted in this process than in the past and that consultation should continue. The plan represents the first, goal-setting phase of the effort and the beginning of the second phase, implementing the identified strategic direction of the higher education system. The success of Washington's economy depends upon a vibrant higher education plan that provides a roadmap to high achievement for our citizens. The plan properly focuses on the needs of the students and the state instead of just the needs of the higher education community.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Ann Daley, Bill Grinstein, Higher Education Coordinating Board; Terry Teale, Council of Presidents; Jan Yoshiwara, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; John Purdy, Council of Faculty Representatives; Kim Lothyan, Everest College; Steve Lindstrom, Northwest Career Colleges Federation; Greg Scheiderer, Independent Colleges of Washington; Jake Stillwell, Washington Student Lobby; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association.