

**SB 5254 - DIGEST**

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 1ST SUB)

Finds that a skilled work force is essential for employers and job seekers to compete in today's global economy. The engines of economic progress are fueled by education and training.

Finds that industry skill panels are a critical and proven form of public-private partnership that harness the expertise of leaders in business, labor, and education to identify work force development strategies for industries that drive Washington's regional economies. Industry skill panels foster innovation and enable industry leaders and public partners to be proactive, addressing changing needs for businesses quickly and strategically. Industry skill panels leverage small state investments with private sector investments to ensure that public resources are better aligned with industry needs.

Declares an intent to support the development and maintenance of industry skill panels in key sectors of the economy as an efficient and effective way to support regional economic development.

Appropriates the sum of one million dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, from the general fund to the work force training and education coordinating board for the purposes of this act.

Appropriates the sum of one million dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, from the general fund to the work force training and education coordinating board for the purposes of this act. The board shall use up to fifty thousand dollars of the appropriation for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, for an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of industry skill panels.