

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5007

As Passed Senate, March 4, 2009

Title: An act relating to allowing public technical colleges to offer associate degrees that prepare students for transfer to selected bachelor's degrees in professional areas.

Brief Description: Allowing public technical colleges to offer degrees that prepare students to transfer to certain bachelor degree programs.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, King, Oemig, Holmquist, McDermott, Kauffman, Pridemore, Kilmer, Hobbs, Tom, Brandland, Swecker, Shin, Franklin, Parlette and Roach).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/13/09 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/04/09, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5007 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Kilmer, Chair; Jarrett, Vice Chair; Becker, Ranking Minority Member; Jacobsen, Kastama, McAuliffe, Pflug, Shin and Stevens.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Each community and technical college district has its own board of trustees. Each board creates comprehensive programs of community and technical college education and training. Technical colleges and college districts containing only technical colleges are restricted from offering programs other than for occupational education, basic skills, and literary purposes. Technical colleges offer only technical degrees and may not offer associate transfer degrees.

A direct transfer agreement associate degree is defined as a degree awarded by a community college to students who have completed a transfer curriculum. It is based on 90 quarter hours of transferable credit in specified courses. It is designed to provide fulfillment of general education requirements only. Remedial course do not satisfy associate transfer degree requirements.

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.

Summary of Substitute Bill: In addition to offering technical degrees, technical colleges are allowed to offer transfer degrees that prepare students for professional bachelor's degrees. The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) adopts rules creating consistency between community and technical colleges offering associate degrees that prepare students for these degrees.

The definition of "occupational education" is changed to include any education and training that will prepare a student for transfer to a baccalaureate degree program in a professional field instead of just those leading to an applied baccalaureate degree. Technical college programs are no longer required to include competency-based instruction or a curriculum approved by representative of employers and labor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960.]

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: Many students who leave technical colleges want to go on to get their baccalaureate degrees, and this will expand the opportunities to do so. Technical colleges already have the facilities and faculty in place to do this – they just need the authorization. These degrees will be focused on professional degrees, so they will not be in direct competition with existing opportunities at community colleges.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; Ronnie Behnke, Renton Technical College; Andrea Olson, Lake Washington Technical College; Calvin Pearson, Bates Technical College; Jan Yoshiwara, SBCTC.