

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5229

As Passed Senate, March 9, 2009

Title: An act relating to the legislative youth advisory council.

Brief Description: Regarding the legislative youth advisory council.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Hobbs, Franklin, Tom, King, Pridemore, Kohl-Welles, Jacobsen, Kilmer and Shin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/09/09, 2/12/09 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/09/09, 45-2.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5229 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Kauffman, Vice Chair, Early Learning; Oemig, Vice Chair, K-12; King, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Hobbs, Holmquist, Jarrett and McDermott.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: In 2005 a 22-member Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) for students between the ages of 14 and 18 was established to provide an opportunity for students to be actively involved in government. Originally, the LYAC was to expire after two years.

The program is administered by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Duties of the LYAC consist of advising the Legislature on legislation, policy, and budget matters relating to youth; advising standing committees, commissions, and task forces on issues related to youth; conducting periodic seminars for its members on leadership, government, and the Legislature; and submitting annual reports to the Legislature with any recommendations for legislation. The LYAC meets between three and six times a year.

In the 2007 session, the process for determining members of the LYAC was changed from a selection process by legislators and the Governor to an application process. Interested

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students may apply by completing an online application and submitting it to the LYAC. The LYAC recommends applicants to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor for final selection, and the Lieutenant Governor notifies all the applicants of the final selections. Additionally, the expiration date for the LYAC was extended for two additional years, until June 30, 2009.

Currently the LYAC may accept grants and donations from public and private sources to support the activities of the LYAC. In the 2007-09 operating budget, \$228,000 was provided to the OSPI for the operation of the LYAC.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Changes to the operation of the LYAC are made. The LYAC is authorized to solicit, not merely accept, grants and donations from public and private sources to support the activities of the LYAC. The OSPI administration of the program and the Lieutenant Governor's selection process of the LYAC members must be done within existing staff and resources. The duties of the LYAC, including meetings and travel reimbursement, is contingent on sufficient funds being available from any source. The expiration date of June 30, 2009, is removed so that there is no expiration date for the LYAC. An emergency clause is added so that the legislation will take effect immediately upon signing by the Governor to avoid the expiration date of the LYAC occurring prior to the effective date of the legislation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: LYAC is the formal voice of Washington state students who are part of the solution on legislative issues regarding youth. This bill allows LYAC members to solicit grants and donations to lessen our load on the state budget when the money is particularly tight. It removes the sunset clause so that LYAC will not expire on June 30th of this year. Last year funding was provided for OSPI, which allowed a program supervisor to be hired, and she has improved the organization of our program. Additionally, the funding has allowed travel reimbursement, which allows us to have geographic diversity in our members. LYAC has numerous accomplishments. For example, LYAC has reached out to legislators to see how they can help them get in touch with youth in their communities. LYAC has a website that is capable of conducting surveys on-line. In those surveys and surveys conducted at high schools issues that are important to your youth in your communities have been targeted for youth input. LYAC also serves as an example to other states who want to establish youth councils. If LYAC goes away then who will speak for the youth in our state?

Persons Testifying: PRO: Tucker Cholvin, Chair, LYAC; Will Goodwin, Jena Graham, Melissa Karapostoles, LYAC; Stephanie Lane, Youth 'N Action.