

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1472

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to membership of the student achievement council.

Brief Description: Adding a graduate student to the student achievement council.

Sponsors: House Committee on College & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Representatives Slatter, Ortiz-Self, Sutherland, Goodman, Ormsby, Valdez, Eslick, Harris-Talley, Lekanoff, Pollet and Chopp).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

College & Workforce Development: 2/8/21, 2/11/21 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/6/21, 77-21.

Passed Senate: 4/11/21, 48-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Adds a graduate student to the membership of the Washington Student Achievement Council and increases the students' term length to two years.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COLLEGE & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Slatter, Chair; Entenman, Vice Chair; Leavitt, Vice Chair; Hansen, Paul, Pollet and Sells.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Jacobsen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Hoff, Kraft and Sutherland.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Chambers, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

The Washington Student Achievement Council (Council) is a state agency consisting of nine voting members. The Council provides strategic planning, oversight, advocacy, and program administration to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment. The members are comprised as follows:

- five citizen members appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, including one student citizen member;
- a representative of an independent, nonprofit higher education institution, selected by an association of independent nonprofit baccalaureate degree-granting institutions;
- a representative of the four-year institutions of higher education, selected by the presidents of those institutions;
- a representative of the state's community and technical college system, selected by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; and
- a representative of the state's kindergarten through grade 12 education system, selected by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in consultation with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and the State Board of Education.

The citizen members are selected based on their knowledge of, or experience in, higher education. Each member serves a four-year term, except for the student member, who serves for one year. The terms of the initial members must be staggered.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The membership of the Council is increased from nine members to 10 members, and there must be both an undergraduate and graduate student member. The term length for the student members is two years, and the terms must be staggered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Council has a huge role in distributing financial aid and ensuring student success. It is devastating to graduate students to not be explicitly included on the Council.

The student member tends to be an undergraduate student. Graduate students should not have to compete for a seat at the table and having a second student on the Council will help the students feel accepted. A graduate student voice on the Council would be helpful in attaining the educational goals of the state, and an important step to recognizing the value of graduate students. While graduate school is not the first step in postsecondary education, it is certainly not the last step. Graduate school serves a role in helping students gain knowledge and skills to do their best work and advance in careers. However, there are no tuition regulations for professional and graduate programs in Washington. Graduate students are not eligible for state financial aid. The cost of graduate school is a great burden, yet Washington is not issuing enough degrees to meet demands. Graduate students are rarely included in conversations about higher education but are drivers of economy and innovation. They are an unnoticed and underappreciated work force. Graduate student issues are usually ignored under a pretense of future wealth.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Slatter, prime sponsor; Hannah Sieben and Payton Swinford, Graduate and Professional Student Senate, University of Washington; Abbie Shew, Student Advocates for Graduate Education; Phoebe Walker, Associated Students of the University of Washington; and Zackary Turner, Washington Student Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.