

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6296

As of January 25, 2024

Title: An act relating to establishing a retail industry work group.

Brief Description: Establishing a retail industry work group.

Sponsors: Senators Boehnke and Dozier.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/26/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to establish a retail workforce workgroup to identify, among other things, programs of value to the retail workforce and possible career pathways.
- Directs the workgroup to recommend up to four colleges to pilot short-term or micro-credentials in support of the retail workforce.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Alicia Kinne-Clawson (786-7407)

Background: Washington Retail Workforce Report. A 2023 report on the Washington retail workforce found the industry has a turnover rate in excess of 60 percent. Among other things, the report recommends improving career advancement opportunities with stacking of credentials toward academic degrees as one potential solution.

Microcredentials. Microcredentials are short, focused credentials designed to provide in-demand skills, know-how and experience and may include competency-based skill recognition. Stackable microcredentials may provide a pathway to a certificate or full

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degree, now or when you are ready.

Summary of Bill: The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges must establish a retail workgroup consisting of higher education, business, labor, and workforce development representatives with expertise in the retail industry. The workgroup must report on the following to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by October 1, 2025:

- educational programs of value to the retail workforce;
- gaps in education opportunities and skill development within existing academic programs;
- best practices in program design for high quality credentials in support of the retail sector;
- career pathways and stackable credentials for individuals in the retail sector; and
- barriers individual face in attaining high quality credentials in support of a retail career.

The workgroup must recommend up to four colleges to pilot programs for short-term credentials and microcredentials in support of the retail workforce.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2024.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.