

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6177

As Passed Senate, February 9, 1996

Title: An act relating to student consumer protection.

Brief Description: Changing provisions for degree granting institutions.

Sponsors: Senators Bauer and Kohl; by request of Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/9/96, 1/18/96 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/9/96, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Bauer, Chair; Kohl, Vice Chair; Drew, Hale, McAuliffe, Prince, Rasmussen, Sheldon, West, Wood and Zarelli.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: All degree-granting institutions must have authorization from the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to operate and to grant degrees. Over time exemptions have been allowed for such things as branch campuses, long-time established independent institutions in Washington, and institutions accredited by an accrediting association. With the guidance of the Attorney General, the HECB established a number of criteria in addition to the accrediting association recognition. However, the Attorney General ruled that the additional criteria are not valid without a change in statute.

Summary of Bill: The HECB may adopt additional criteria and is not required to grant a waiver from the degree-granting process based solely on its recognition by an accrediting association.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: None requested.

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

Testimony For: This is a consumer protection issue. The HECB is responsible for protecting students from "degree mill" type institutions.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Susan Patrick, Assoc. Director, HECB.