

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6582

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, January 25, 1996

Title: An act relating to higher education.

Brief Description: Reducing financial disparities between part-time and full-time faculty at community and technical colleges.

Sponsors: Senators Kohl, Bauer, Spanel, McAuliffe, Winsley, Rinehart and Smith.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/24/96, 1/25/96 [DPS-WM].
Ways & Means: 1/31/96.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6582 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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

Staff: Jennifer Hanlon (786-7784)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Michael Groesch (786-7434)

Background: Since 1983, the number of part-time faculty in the community college system has grown significantly. According to a 1995 estimate, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges saves \$57.3 million annually by having classes taught by part-time faculty.

A 1990 survey by the Washington Federation of Teachers indicated that 60 percent of part-time instructors in the community and technical college system rely on their earnings as instructors for the primary source of household income. Additionally, part-time faculty salaries at community colleges in Washington are between 35 and 57 percent of full-time faculty salaries at those institutions.

Summary of Substitute Bill: A task force is created to devise a method for bringing part-time faculty salaries up to parity with full-time faculty salaries. The task force comprises representatives from the Governor's office, the Legislature, the faculty bargaining organizations, and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

The task force must report recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 15, 1996.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The appropriation for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1995, is changed to the fiscal year ending June 30, 1997.

Appropriation: \$3,700,000.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 18, 1996.

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

Testimony For (Higher Education): Discrepancies in pay impacts the morale of the entire system. Employees are just asking for equal pay for equal work. Using too many part-time faculty impacts the entire system adversely because students do not have access to part-time faculty outside of the classroom. It is also difficult to find instructors because many are transient. It is especially important to get the faculty who are being paid the least up to a higher level. Many groups have tried to address this issue for several years. Part-time faculty at community and technical colleges have an essential role in providing students with an excellent and affordable education. Consistent data techniques for reporting faculty salaries are necessary. It might be helpful to have more part-time people on the task force.

Testimony Against (Higher Education): None.

Testified (Higher Education): PRO: Wendy Rader-Konofalski, WA Federation of Teachers; Doug Jensen, Pierce College; Glen Ness, Pierce College; Diane Butcher-Evans, Green River Community College; Vince Troccoli, Pierce College; Lenore Vest, WA Education Association; Keith Hoeller, Green River Community College; Larry Lael, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Testimony For (Ways & Means): Salary disparities are a result of historical inequities which have been compounded by fixed salary increases. The poor salary structure will make it increasingly difficult to hire competent instructors as enrollments grow in the next decade. Colleges have been trying to do it on the backs of part-time employees.

It would be helpful if the bill indicates that the problem exists statewide and that a statewide solution is needed. It would also be helpful if two trustees from the State Board of Trustees for Community and Technical Colleges be added to the task force in order that all constituent groups be included. The problem of part-time salary disparities also exists for employees of the four-year higher education institutions. To address the problem of salary disparities, it will be necessary to create consistent data reporting techniques which accurately reflect salaries.

Testimony Against (Ways & Means): None.

Testified (Ways & Means): Wendy Rader-Konofalski, WA Federation of Teachers (pro); Lenore Vest, Assoc. for Higher Education, WA Educ. Assn. (pro); Larry Lael, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (pro).