

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5411

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education, February 28, 2005  
Ways & Means, March 7, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to authorizing branch campuses to offer lower-division courses.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing branch campuses to offer lower-division courses.

**Sponsors:** Senators Pridemore, Kohl-Welles, Benton, Schmidt, McAuliffe, Zarelli, Rasmussen, Thibaudeau, Doumit, Shin, Regala, Keiser, Prentice, Fairley, Jacobsen and Pflug.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: 2/3/05, 2/28/05 [DPS-WM, DNP, w/oRec].  
Ways & Means: 3/7/05 [DP2S, w/oRec]

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING, K-12 & HIGHER EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5411 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair; Weinstein, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Berkey, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Rasmussen and Rockefeller.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Mulliken and Schoesler.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Delvin.

**Staff:** Heather Lewis-Lechner (786-7448)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5411 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Fairley, Hewitt, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Pridemore, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller and Thibaudeau.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Brandland, Parlette and Schoesler.

**Staff:** Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

**Background:** Branch campuses were created by statute in 1989. At that time, five branch campuses were established in growing urban areas to be operated by the University of Washington (UW) and Washington State University (WSU). The University of Washington campuses are located in Tacoma and Bothell. The Washington State University campuses were originally located in Vancouver, the Tri-Cities, and Spokane. Under legislation passed last session, the campus in Spokane is no longer considered a branch campus but the other two remain.

The missions of the branch campuses, as established by statute, are to expand access to higher education and contribute to regional economic development through collaboration with community and technical colleges. The branch campuses are responsible for ensuring expansion of upper division and graduate programs in their regions.

The Legislature has also recognized, in statute, that there are alternative models by which to achieve the primary mission and that some campuses may have additional secondary missions in response to regional needs. Under the legislation passed last session, the branch campuses were directed by the legislature to submit proposals regarding the future "evolution" of their campus to the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). The HECB was directed under that legislation to review the recommendations from each of the campuses in the context of statewide goals and to present options to the legislature.

Each of the branch campus proposals includes the option of expanding into lower division coursework. The HECB report recommends that the UW-Tacoma and WSU-Vancouver be allowed to admit freshman and sophomore students. The report also recommends that UW-Bothell and WSU-Tri-Cities be allowed to offer limited lower-division courses that are linked to specific majors.

**Summary of Second Substitute Bill:** The legislature states its intent to recognize that different regions have different capacity gaps and different programmatic needs and, therefore, each campus must be allowed to expand into lower division coursework in a way that reflects the needs of the region it serves. The primary mission of the branch campuses is amended to include expansion of access to higher education through both collaboration with the community and technical colleges and by offering lower division courses or admitting freshman and sophomore students to the extent allowed by the chapter. This additional authority does not permit the branch campuses to restrict transfer capacity and access, but rather is intended to authorize the campuses to create additional lower-division capacity in accordance with regional needs.

It is re-emphasized that a "primary" responsibility of each of the research institutions is to expand upper division and graduate educational programs under guidelines adopted by the HECB as well as in accordance with proportionality agreements that emphasize access for transfer students.

Each branch campus must be funded commensurate with its unique mission and degree programs offered but at a level less than a research university.

University of Washington Tacoma (UW-Tacoma). UW-Tacoma is authorized to offer lower-division coursework and may admit freshman and sophomore students, in accordance

with the campus plan submitted to the higher education coordinating board in 2004. UW-Tacoma must continue to collaborate with community and technical colleges.

University of Washington Bothell (UW-Bothell). UW-Bothell is authorized to offer lower-division course work to the extent the courses are linked to specific majors in fields that are not addressed by programs offered at Cascadia Community College. UW-Bothell must establish a co-admission or co-enrollment agreements with Cascadia Community Colleges by 2006. Beginning in 2006, UW-Bothell may offer targeted programs for freshman and sophomores. The programs must create additional baccalaureate pathways and must supplement and not duplicate existing two plus two programs with community colleges.

Washington State University Vancouver (WSU-Vancouver). WSU-Vancouver is authorized to offer lower-division course work and admit freshman and sophomore students.

Washington State University Tri-Cities (WSU-Tri-Cities). WSU-Tri-Cities is authorized to offer lower-division course work to the extent the courses are linked to specific majors in fields that are not addressed by programs offered at the local community and technical college serving the community in which the program is offered. WSU-Tri-Cities must establish a co-admission or co-enrollment agreement with Columbia Basin College by 2006.

**Second Substitute Bill Compared to the Substitute Bill:** Adds a provision that it is the Legislature's intent to continue to make enrollment and per student funding decisions for higher education institutions in the omnibus operating budget.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The intent section is revised to recognize that different regions have different capacity gaps and different programmatic needs and states that each campus must be allowed to expand into lower division course work in a way that reflects the needs of the region it serves. Language is added to clarify that the new authority does not permit the branch campuses to restrict transfer capacity and access, but rather is intended to authorize the campuses to create additional lower-division capacity in accordance with regional needs.

The reference to an intent to fund at a level that is a combination of instruction and research is removed.

Rather than treating each branch campus the same and allowing each campus to offer both baccalaureate and graduate level higher education programs, the substitute bill treats each campus differently as to what lower-division course work or freshman and sophomore programs are authorized.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Testimony For (Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education):** There is a need to expand access to higher education throughout the state. This bill is not the fix for all the problems in higher education, it is just addressing one part of the access problem. There is tremendous local support for branch campus expansion. While the 2+2 system works for many students,

many other students want a full four-year experience and are willing to leave the state to get it if it is not available in Washington. The expansion of Washington State University-Vancouver is the number one priority for many of the businesses in Clark County. Businesses need increased access to local talent and that means keeping that talent in the area. If Clark County had a four-year institution then students would stay in the area. Clark College is supportive of an expansion of WSU-Vancouver and does not see any adverse effects to the 2+2 programs as long as state financial support for the expansion is not at the expense of Clark College. Expansion into lower division at the branch campuses is also a benefit to those students in the upper division courses because often those students need to supplement their studies with lower division courses and this way they would not have to go to another campus to do that.

**Testimony Against (Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education):** None.

Other: We need to make sure we are looking at branch campuses in the context of the needs of the entire system of higher education in Washington. The state cannot afford to allow all four branch campuses to expand into lower division coursework. While everyone recognizes the need for increased access, there is a concern for where the money is coming from and at the expense of what other areas. There are other options along with branch campus expansion that should be considered. The Central Washington University Centers are working and are an economical and responsive way to address access issues and should be considered as well. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) recommendations differentiate between the different campuses and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) believes that makes the most sense. A four year institutions in Southwest Washington makes sense because the unmet need there is for both lower division and upper division. The need around the other branch campuses is different. In the SBCTC's recent capacity study, the Board found that, other than in Southwest Washington, the greatest demand in Washington is for upper division coursework. The SBCTC's primary concern is not about competition with the four-year institutions but is about making sure students coming out of the community and technical colleges have somewhere to transfer to and complete their education. The faculty unions also want to make sure that personnel issues are addressed if expansion occurs. Currently branch campuses have a higher part-time faculty to full-time faculty ratio because they are using part-time faculty to keep costs down. The union wants to make sure that the money for branch campus expansion is not coming at the expense of faculty salaries.

**Who Testified (Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education):** PRO: Senator Pridemore, prime sponsor; Jamie Corning, Assoc. Students of UW and WSU; Bart Phillips, Columbia River EDC; Rick Wickman, Identity Clark County; Roberto Guitierrez, Clark College. OTHER: Nick Cizek, Assoc. Students of WWU; Ann Anderson, CWU; Jack Oharah, Edmonds Community College; Steve Wall, Pierce College; Jan Yoshiwara, SBCTC; Sandra Schroeder, AFT Washington.

**Testimony For (Ways & Means):** The campuses in Tacoma and Seattle are greatly underutilized -- they are largely vacant in the afternoon and evenings. Admitting students to take classes during these times has no implications for the capital budget. Basing funding for institutions on FTE enrollments is bureaucratic and counterproductive.

**Testimony Against (Ways & Means):** None.

**Who Testified (Ways & Means):** PRO: Michael Nelson.