
SENATE BILL 5217

State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2011 Regular Session

By Senators Shin, White, Nelson, Sheldon, Murray, Delvin, Rockefeller, Harper, Kline, Keiser, Conway, Chase, Eide, and Fraser

Read first time 01/18/11. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to appointing student members on the board of
2 trustees for community colleges; amending RCW 28B.50.100; adding a new
3 section to chapter 28B.50 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that decisions made by
6 governing boards of each respective institution greatly impact the
7 lives of students and that student participation in the decision-making
8 process can provide insight into the impacts of actions by trustees
9 that are not always measurable through reports and statistics.
10 Students are on campus every day using services and experiencing
11 aspects of the institution that board members may only see on paper,
12 providing a unique and valuable perspective that should not be
13 overlooked.

14 Students serving on governing boards of higher education have
15 proven effective in Washington and in over thirty other states. For
16 over ten years students at Washington's four-year institutions of
17 higher education have served as voting members on the board of
18 trustees, regents, and the higher education coordinating board,

1 providing greater depth in board deliberations and a well-educated
2 conduit for students to voice ideas and concerns.

3 The student perspective at community colleges also brings the board
4 closer to their community. Student populations at community colleges
5 are the most diverse of any institution of higher education in the
6 state. Being on campus and in class every day, students are exposed to
7 a more diverse group than any member of the board representing any one
8 group of the community.

9 Student positions on governing boards are also a valuable tool for
10 developing leadership through experiential learning. Student members
11 learn processes of institutional governance, become involved in campus
12 projects, analyze policy proposals, and participate in board
13 discussions and decision making.

14 It is the intent of the legislature to enhance community college
15 governance by fostering a more dynamic relationship between students
16 and institutions through the encouragement of student participation in
17 policy development and decision making at the district and state level.

18 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.50.100 and 1991 c 238 s 37 are each amended to
19 read as follows:

20 There is hereby created a board of trustees for each college
21 district as set forth in this chapter. Each board of trustees shall be
22 composed of five trustees, except as provided in section 3 of this act,
23 who shall be appointed by the governor for terms commencing October 1st
24 of the year in which appointed. In making such appointments the
25 governor shall give consideration to geographical diversity, and
26 representing labor, business, women, and racial and ethnic minorities,
27 in the membership of the boards of trustees. The boards of trustees
28 for districts containing technical colleges shall include at least one
29 member from business and one member from labor.

30 The successors of the trustees initially appointed shall be
31 appointed by the governor to serve for a term of five years except that
32 any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the
33 expiration of any term shall be appointed only for the remainder of the
34 term. Each member shall serve until a successor is appointed and
35 qualified.

36 Every trustee shall be a resident and qualified elector of the
37 college district. No trustee may be an employee of the community and

1 technical college system, a member of the board of directors of any
2 school district, or a member of the governing board of any public or
3 private educational institution.

4 Each board of trustees shall organize itself by electing a chairman
5 from its members. The board shall adopt a seal and may adopt such
6 bylaws, rules and regulations as it deems necessary for its own
7 government. Three members of the board shall constitute a quorum, but
8 a lesser number may adjourn from time to time and may compel the
9 attendance of absent members in such manner as prescribed in its
10 bylaws, rules, or regulations. The district president, or if there be
11 none, the president of the college, shall serve as, or may designate
12 another person to serve as, the secretary of the board, who shall not
13 be deemed to be a member of the board.

14 Members of the boards of trustees may be removed for misconduct or
15 malfeasance in office in the manner provided by RCW 28B.10.500.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.50 RCW
17 to read as follows:

18 (1) Boards of trustees for each college district, by majority vote,
19 may establish a sixth trustee that shall be filled by a student. The
20 governor shall select each student member from a list of candidates, of
21 at least three and not more than five, submitted by the associated
22 student governments or their equivalent of the college district. The
23 student member shall hold his or her office for a term of one year,
24 beginning July 1st and ending June 30th, or until the student member's
25 successor is appointed and qualified, whichever is later. The student
26 member shall be a full-time student in good standing at a college
27 within the college district at the time of appointment.

28 (2) A student appointed under this section shall excuse himself or
29 herself from participation or voting on matters relating to the hiring,
30 discipline, or tenure of faculty members and personnel.

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