

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5702

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Higher Education & Workforce Development, February 17, 2023
Ways & Means, February 23, 2023

Title: An act relating to expanding the students experiencing homelessness and foster youth pilot program.

Brief Description: Expanding the students experiencing homelessness and foster youth pilot program.

Sponsors: Senators Trudeau, Nobles, Dhingra, Hunt, Liias, Lovelett, Nguyen, Pedersen, Saldaña, Valdez and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/15/23, 2/17/23 [DPS-WM].
Ways & Means: 2/21/23, 2/23/23 [DPS (HEWD), w/oRec].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Makes the students experiencing homelessness and foster youth program permanent.
- Adds the tribal college as eligible to participate in the program.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5702 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Randall, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Holy, Ranking Member; Hawkins.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Alicia Kinne-Clawson (786-7407)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5702 as recommended by Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rolfes, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair, Operating & Revenue; Mullet, Vice Chair, Capital; Wilson, L., Ranking Member, Operating; Gildon, Assistant Ranking Member, Operating; Rivers, Assistant Ranking Member, Capital; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Member, Capital; Billig, Boehnke, Conway, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Muzzall, Nguyen, Pedersen, Saldaña, Torres, Van De Wege and Wellman.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Schoesler, Ranking Member, Capital; Braun and Wagoner.

Staff: Michele Alishahi (786-7433)

Background: In 2019, the Legislature established pilot programs to provide assistance and accommodations to students experiencing homelessness and to students who were in foster care when they graduated from high school.

The participating community and technical colleges (CTCs) and four-year institutions must provide accommodations to homeless students and students who were in foster care at high school graduation. The accommodations may include:

- access to laundry facilities, storage, locker rooms and showers, and technology;
- reduced-price meals or meal plans;
- access to short-term housing or housing assistance, especially during seasonal breaks; and
- case management services.

In 2021, the program was expanded from two to four public four-year institutions. The pilot was also expanded at CTCs, for eight total. The pilot program's expiration date was extended to July 1, 2024, from July 1, 2023. In 2022, the pilot program was further expanded to include six public four-year institutions and all CTCs.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): The students experiencing homelessness and foster youth program is no longer a pilot program with participation limited to eight CTC and four public four-year institutions. Subject to appropriation, all CTCs and public four-year institutions are eligible to participate. The program is also expanded to include the tribal college.

The expiration date for the pilot program is eliminated.

Appropriation: The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on First Substitute (Higher Education & Workforce Development): PRO: Forty-eight percent of students in Washington State experience housing insecurity. Nineteen percent of students experience homelessness. Thirty-eight percent face food insecurity. The Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness pilot has been an invaluable resource for students who are unhoused or aging out of the foster care system. In three years, over 2650 students have been served, with 91 percent of baccalaureate students and 85 percent of CTC students completing the quarter in which they received housing and food assistance, case management, or other accommodations. The pilot program expires next year, and this program is necessary to continue offering those resources. With potentially generational economic and educational impacts on the line it is time now to invest in students. This bill would mean students have a place to go after class, have a roof over their head, and have the tools to be successful.

Persons Testifying (Higher Education & Workforce Development): PRO: Senator Yasmin Trudeau, Prime Sponsor; Joel Anderson, University of Washington Graduate and Professional Student Senate; Steve DuPont, Central Washington University; Charles Adkins; Naira Gonzales Aranda; Alex Davidson, The Associated Students of the University of Washington; Adán Mendoza-Sandoval, VP, WA Student Association; Sopena Chay, South Puget Sound Community College; Madeline Sprute, Associated Students of Tacoma Community College.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Higher Education & Workforce Development): No one.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on First Substitute (Ways & Means): PRO: Fifty percent of people in Washington experience some type of housing or food insecurity. Ninety percent of allocated funds go directly to students in need for food assistance, case management, transportation, laundry, and more. Pilots are limited due to the transitory nature of their funding. This would make an important housing assistance program permanent and will benefit thousands of students.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Joel Anderson, University of Washington Graduate and Professional Student Senate; Madeline Sprute, Tacoma Community College; Arlen Harris, SBCTC.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Ways & Means): No one.