

## Legislature, Governor enact belt-tightening bill

The first bills that directly tackle the state budget crisis were passed by the 2009 Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Chris Gregoire this week.

SB 5460, the so-called Belt Tightening Bill, imposes the hiring and spending freezes ordered by the Governor last August. It also adds provisions to increase state-government savings.

HB 1694 implements \$635 million in spending cuts in the general fund and near-general fund budget for the current biennium, which ends June 30. All state agencies will be required to impose significant cuts to reach the desired savings levels.

"The bills I am signing today take the necessary step of slowing state spending to address the revenue shortfalls that have been growing significantly since November," Gov. Gregoire said on Wednesday.

## Tuition a popular topic for advisory committees

As legislators this week heard testimony on a proposal to create a new advisory committee on tuition policy, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) was meeting with its already-existing advisory council to discuss the same subject. [Read more.](#)

The HECB's Director of Government, College & University Relations, Chris Thompson, noted the coincidence during a hearing on HB 2118 before the House Higher Education Committee on Tuesday. While the HECB does not oppose the legislation, Thompson said it was "not fully convinced it is necessary, given active work going on to this point."

As originally written, HB 2118 requires the HECB, within existing resources, to convene the new tuition policy advisory committee. The committee would be guided by the legislative desire for rational long-term planning and development policies for higher education.

The House committee later recommended a "do pass" on the bill, but with amendments that were still being prepared on Friday.

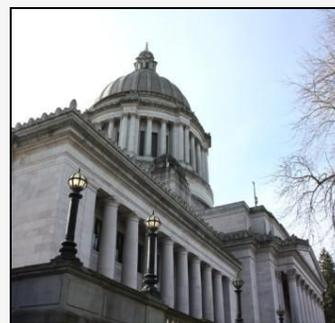
## Technology bill earns committee support

A substitute bill that asks the HECB to convene a task force to propose ways of using technology to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of higher education was recommended for passage this week by the House Higher Education Committee.

SHB 1946 also would encourage institutions of higher education to use online learning technologies, such as web-conferencing systems, and to share materials related to effective use of such tools.

Bob Billings, the HECB's chief information officer, said the agency supports the approach taken in the bill. "We know technology has radically changed the world of higher education...and it's imperative for us as a system to learn new ways to adapt to this changing world," Billings told the committee.

### A weekly report on higher education during the 2009 Legislative Session



#### *Page 2:* Pilot mentoring program proposed for Western

#### *What's news:*

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## Comprehensive financial aid bill heard in the Senate

Another bill that would make significant changes in student financial aid programs received a hearing Wednesday before the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee.

SB 6044, the “Revitalizing Financial Aid” measure, would:

- Reduce the Washington Scholars merit program to a two-year award;
- Suspend scholarship selections for the Educational Opportunity Grant (for transfer students facing “placebound” circumstances);
- Consider “placebound” students for the State Need Grant program;
- Allow institutions to use their 3.5 percent Financial Aid Fund for dual credit students; and
- Require the “opportunity passport” label to be included on tuition statements and financial aid award letters, as well as on all HECB administered program materials.

The Senate bill is similar to an omnibus financial aid bill heard in the House (HB 2021).

Testimony supporting the Senate bill (HECB, SBCTC, and Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board) noted it attempts to simplify the financial aid process and information. The bill preserves the most effective financial aid programs and keeps commitments to current recipients.

While the re-branding provision could facilitate financial aid marketing efforts, the HECB noted that no such statewide marketing effort currently exists. Without such a program, a re-branding effort is less likely to be successful.

Opposition testimony (Council of Presidents and Washington Student Lobby) raised concerns that elimination of the Educational Opportunity Grant would cause unintended harm to transfer students and that the re-branding effort may confuse students. Several noted potential federal compliance issues and said including federal loans under the state label may dilute the repayment obligation.

## WWU mentoring bill receives support in House hearing

A bill that would advance one of the HECB’s strategic master plan implementation strategies – encouraging college students to become mentors for younger students – was heard in the House Higher Education Committee on Tuesday.

HB 1896 would create a pilot mentoring program at Western



Washington University (WWU) targeting at-risk elementary school students. The idea emerged from a strategic master plan implementation workgroup that evaluated demographic trends and looked at a variety of “best practices” for improving college access and success – including mentoring projects.

The WWU pilot project would be similar to a Wisconsin program highlighted in earlier committee testimony. It would award State Work Study funds to WWU to partner with community and technical colleges to provide mentoring at local elementary schools. The colleges would build on early outreach efforts to encourage K-12 students to graduate from high school and go to college, while providing more financial assistance for needy college students through State Work Study.

WWU representatives said in-kind personnel and privately raised funds would provide administrative support. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges representatives say Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College and Skagit Valley College are interested in becoming involved in the project.

## Effort to maximize higher ed delivery system praised in House resolution

An effort to optimize the statewide delivery of higher education services is being commended in a [House Concurrent Resolution](#) that awaits possible floor action. [Read more.](#)

## Next week's schedule:

- **Tuesday Feb. 24:** Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee. Public hearings: SB 6034, 5925, 5173, SJM 8010. 10 a.m., Senate Hearing Room 3.
- **Tuesday Feb. 24:** House Ways & Means Committee. Public hearing: SHB 1235, 1355. 1:30 p.m., House Hearing Room A.
- **Tuesday Feb. 24:** Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee. Public hearings: SB 5994, 5995. Senate Hearing Room 2.
- **Wednesday Feb. 25:** Last day for committee reports in the house of origin, except fiscal committees.
- **Wednesday Feb. 25:** House Education Appropriations Committee. Public hearing: SHB 1323, HB 2021, 1328, 1312. 8 a.m., House Hearing Room A.

## House higher education bills:

- **HB 1025** - Requiring disclosure of certain information relating to higher education course materials.
- **SHB 1096** - Enhancing small business participation in state purchasing.
- **SHB 1129** - Establishing a lifelong learning account steering committee.
- **HB 1130** - Convening a workgroup to develop a single, coordinated student access portal for college information.
- **HB 1156** - Creating a preference in the alternative route certification program for veterans and National Guard members.
- **HB 1216** - Adopting a 2009-2011 capital budget.
- **SHB 1235** - Making certain current higher education tuition-setting practices permanent.
- **HB 1243** - Making 2009 supplemental operating appropriations.
- **HB 1244** - Making 2009-2011 operating appropriations.
- **HB 1312** - Eliminating the exclusive authority of the University of Washington and Washington State University to offer certain engineering courses.
- **SHB 1323** - Providing for coordination of workforce and economic development.
- **HB 1336** - Discouraging pre-college courses at public four-year institutions of higher education.
- **HB 1341** - Motivating students through incentives to pursue postsecondary education by eliminating statewide assessments as a high school graduation requirement.
- **HB 1353** - Regarding employment opportunities at institutions of higher education.
- **SHB 1355** - Establishing the opportunity internship program for high school students.
- **HB 1394** - Changing the timeline for the state comprehensive plan for workforce training and education.
- **HB 1395** - Clarifying terms for workforce and economic development.
- **HB 1428** - Establishing the field of dreams program.
- **HB 1446** - Requiring the Higher Education Coordinating Board to develop a grant program to encourage training for students studying in the medical field to work with individuals with disabilities.
- **HB 1452** - Concerning economic stimulus.
- **HB 1466** - Regarding student fees, charges and assessments.
- **HB 1467** - Establishing the University of Washington Snohomish County branch campus.
- **HB 1474** - Changing border county opportunity program provisions.
- **HB 1487** - Regarding resident student classification.
- **HB 1497** - Eliminating boards and commissions.
- **HB 1545** - Authorizing the Higher Education Coordinating Board to offer higher education annuities and retirement income plans.
- **HB 1594** - Creating the environmental cleanup opportunity grant program.
- **HB 1643** - Regarding harassment, intimidation and bullying policies and practices at regional universities.
- **HB 1671** - Regarding higher education accountability.
- **HB 1672** - Requiring an annual college learning assessment.
- **HB 1673** - Requiring development of a consumer report card with information about institutions of higher education.
- **HB 1674** - Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of institutions of higher education.
- **HB 1675** - Changing the work experience provisions of the alternative route partnership grant program.
- **ESHB 1694** - Addressing fiscal matters for the 2007-2009 biennium.
- **HB 1706** - Expanding resident student eligibility for purposes of the state need grant program.
- **HB 1726** - Creating Bellevue College.

- [HB 1763](#) – Requiring that all classifications of students be treated equitably and consistently in the higher education admissions process.
- [SHB 1841](#) – Adding a faculty member to the governing board of each four-year institution of higher education.
- [HB 1884](#) – Reviewing the decision to terminate Western Washington University's football team.
- [HB 1898](#) - Setting priorities for higher education capital projects.
- [HB 1901](#) – Establishing additional health sciences and services authorities in certain areas.
- [HB 1904](#) – Regarding high-cost critical programs at institutions of higher education.
- [HB 1914](#) – Authorizing the financing of higher education institutions' maintenance and operations through the use of certificates of participation.
- [HB 1915](#) – Changing Running Start provisions.
- [SHB 1946](#) – Regarding higher education online technology.
- [HB 1986](#) – Authorizing a peer mentoring pilot program at Western Washington University and a community or technical college.
- [HB 2000](#) – Providing a coordinated approach to creating an adequate supply of well-qualified mathematics and science teachers.
- [SHB 2021](#) – Revitalizing student financial aid.
- [HB 2087](#) – Eliminating certain boards, committees and commissions and the transfer of certain duties effective June 30, 2009.
- [HB 2098](#) – Creating a single need-based financial aid program.
- [HB 2111](#) – Regarding firearms safety education programs.
- [HB 2118](#) – Convening an advisory committee on tuition policy.
- [HB 2119](#) - Expanding dual credit opportunities.
- [HB 2151](#) - Eliminating boards and commissions on June 30, 2010.
- [HB 2227](#) – Enacting the evergreen jobs act.
- [HCR 4403](#) - Providing for the 2008-2018 state comprehensive plan for workforce training.
- [HCR 4404](#) – Commending the Higher Education Coordinating Board for its initiative to develop a higher education system plan.
- **Senate higher education bills:**
  - [SSB 5001](#) - Eliminating the matching fund requirement for the American Indian endowed scholarship program.
  - [SSB 5007](#) - Allowing public technical colleges to offer associate transfer degrees.
  - [SSB 5043](#) - Convening a work group to develop a single, coordinated student access portal for college information.
  - [SSB 5044](#) - Changing work study provisions
  - [SSB 5048](#) - Providing for coordination of workforce and economic development.
  - [SB 5077](#) - Creating the historically Black college fund pilot project.
  - [SB 5078](#) - Authorizing the University of Washington to set business fees.
  - [SB 5088](#) - Regarding salaries for adjunct faculty.
  - [SB 5089](#) - Requiring an ethical audit of the personnel management systems at community and technical colleges.
  - [SB 5106](#) - Creating an independent four-year polytechnical college and an investment district to finance it.
  - [SB 5173](#) - Authorizing the regional universities to confer honorary doctorate degrees.
  - [SB 5174](#) - Providing an incentive to improve the on-time graduation rates at institutions of higher education.
  - [SB 5175](#) - Changing the Washington college promise scholarship program.
  - [SB 5176](#) - Creating a bi-state partnership for teachers of children with visual impairments.
  - [SB 5177](#) - Creating a global Asia institute within the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies.
  - [SB 5188](#) - Requiring school districts to provide remedial postsecondary education or to pay for the cost.
  - [SB 5222](#) - Adopting a 2009-2011 capital budget.
  - [SB 5237](#) - Requiring the development of three-year baccalaureate programs.
  - [SSB 5260](#) - Motivating students through incentives to pursue postsecondary education by eliminating statewide assessments as a high school graduation requirement.
  - [SB 5264](#) - Providing for academic employee salary increments for community and technical colleges.
  - [SSB 5276](#) - Eliminating the exclusive authority of the University of Washington and Washington State University to offer certain engineering courses.
  - [SB 5308](#) - Authorizing the higher education coordinating board to offer higher education annuities and retirement income plans.

- [SB 5316](#) - Changing the timeline for the state comprehensive plan for workforce training and education.
- [SSB 5317](#) - Clarifying the terms for workforce and economic development.
- [SB 5376](#) - Requiring the Higher Education Coordinating Board to develop a grant program to encourage training for students studying in the medical field to work with individuals with disabilities.
- [SB 5405](#) – Regarding resident student classification.
- [SB 5407](#) – Making 2009 supplemental operating appropriations.
- [SSB 5410](#) – Regarding the digital learning commons.
- [ESSB 5460](#) – Reducing the administrative cost of state government during the 2007-2009 and 2009-2022 fiscal biennia.
- [SB 5502](#) – Establishing the primary care physician conditional tuition waiver program.
- [SSB 5553](#) – Promoting economic development through promoting innovation and the commercialization of technologies.
- [SB 5554](#) – Regarding the job skills program.
- [ESSB 5555](#) – Establishing a lifelong learning account steering committee.
- [SB 5575](#) – Creating Bellevue College.
- [SB 5588](#) – Administering, suspending, and eliminating boards and commissions.
- [SB 5600](#) – Making 2009-2011 operating appropriations.
- [SB 5604](#) – Concerning economic stimulus.
- [SB 5606](#) – Creating the Washington investment in student excellence scholarship program.
- [SB 5625](#) – Creating a state college in Snohomish County.
- [SB 5710](#) – Authorizing the board of regents at each state university to establish tuition fees rates.
- [SSB 5734](#) – Making certain current higher education tuition-setting practices permanent.
- [SB 5778](#) – Requiring disclosure of certain course material information for higher education courses.
- [SB 5784](#) – Reviewing the decision to terminate Western Washington University’s football team.
- [SB 5789](#) – Authorizing a second health sciences and services authority.
- [SB 5809](#) – Creating a temporary workforce employment and training program.
- [SB 5864](#) - Establishing the University of Washington Snohomish County branch campus.
- [SB 5900](#) - Regarding youth innovation education.
- [SSB 5924](#) – Changing Running Start provisions.
- [SSB 5941](#)- Regarding comprehensive education data improvement systems.
- [SB 5959](#) - Expanding resident student eligibility for purposes of the state need grant program.
- [SB 5994](#) – Eliminating boards and commissions on June 30, 2010.
- [SB 6044](#)- Revitalizing student financial aid.
- [SJM 8010](#) - Petitioning the federal government to eliminate federal financial benefits from accruing to colleges and universities that use legacy preferences in admissions.
- [SCR 8403](#) - Creating a joint select committee concerning Latino accessibility to higher education.
- [SCR 8404](#) – Providing for the 2008-18 state comprehensive plan for workforce training.