

Senate and House preparing to release proposed 2009-11 budgets

The higher-education community across the state is anxiously awaiting next week's expected release of the House and Senate versions of the 2009-11 biennial budget.

The Legislature's already-difficult task grew even harder on Thursday with announcement that the March revenue forecast is down another \$552 million for the remainder of the current biennium and the following two years, compared to February's preliminary estimate.

"The forecast signals that we will have to continue to make shared sacrifices in these tough economic times," Gov. Chris Gregoire said in a statement released Thursday. "Unfortunately, even with the billions of dollars heading our way from the federal recovery package, Washington still faces the largest budget gap in state history. We're certainly getting much needed help, but it's not a cure-all."

Since Gov. Gregoire's proposed 2009-11 budget was released in December, the state's revenue picture has worsened. During legislative hearings, higher-education institutions were asked to project the impact of budget cuts 50 percent higher than those proposed by the Governor.

Legislative efforts to craft the budget are almost certain to include cuts in higher education programs, tuition increases, or both. One uncertainty is how money in the federal recovery package will be applied to help pay for higher education programs in the next biennium. The Senate is expected to release its proposed budget late next week. The House version will follow later.

By any other name: Bill aims to clarify statutory references to 'high demand'

The term "high demand" is commonly used in discussions about educating students for tomorrow's jobs. However, the term may mean different things in different statutes.

Without changing existing policy, House Bill 1395 inserts common terms and definitions where the term "high demand" is used in existing laws. For example, the bill defines "high employer demand program of study" as an apprenticeship, or an undergraduate or graduate certificate or degree program in which the number of students prepared for employment per year from in-state institutions is substantially less than the number of projected job openings per year in that field, statewide or in a substate region.

The changes reflect work performed by a state-agency workgroup that studied the issue in 2007.

The bill, which passed the House by a 95-0 vote March 9, had a hearing before the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee on Tuesday.

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House Committee recommends do pass on college portal bill

By a 10-0 vote, the House Higher Education Committee on Friday recommended passage of a SSB 5043, which would require the HECB to convene a work group to develop a one-stop, web-based portal for college information.

The purpose of the web portal would be to provide comprehensive information concerning financial, academic, and career planning, admissions, scholarships, and financial aid. The portal would also contain on-line applications for these services. While supporting the legislation, three committee members either said the bill needs more work or will not provide all the technology solutions legislators are seeking.

The committee on Friday also recommended do pass on SB 5001, which removes a matching-fund requirement for the American Indian Endowed Scholarship Program.

Next week's schedule:

- **Tuesday March 24:** Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee. Public hearings: 2SHB 1025, SHB 1328, 2SHB 1946, EHB 1986, SHB 1808, HB 1487. 10 a.m. Senate Hearing Room 3.
- **Tuesday March 24:** House Higher Education Committee. Public hearings: SB 5316, SSB 5317. 10 a.m., House Hearing Room D.
- **Wednesday March 25:** House Higher Education Committee. Work sessions: Higher education accountability and performance reporting; Interim planning. 1:30 p.m., House Hearing Room D.
- **Wednesday March 25:** Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee. Executive session: bills heard in committee. 3:30 p.m. Senate Hearing Room 3.
- **Friday March 27:** Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee. Executive session: bills heard in committee. 1:30 p.m. Senate Hearing Room 3.
- **Friday March 27:** House Higher Education Committee. Possible executive session: Senate bills previously heard in committee. 8 a.m., House Hearing Room D.

Internship programs lead students in surprising directions, bill supporter says

A 2005 federal grant that created student internships and scholarships in high-demand occupations may have changed or even saved young lives, said one supporter of a bill that would establish a similar statewide

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program for low-income high school students. 2SHB 1355 establishes the Opportunity Internship Program by encouraging local consortia of economic-development and educational partners to create internships in high-demand fields for low-income students, and to promise job interviews to those who eventually complete postsecondary programs of study.

Sue Ambler, president and CEO of the Workforce Development Council of Snohomish County, told the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee how the earlier In-Demand Scholars Program had changed the life of one high school boy.

Ambler said the boy's parents laughed at him when he announced he was entering a program at Bothell High School that focused on construction jobs. They noted that the boy had never even raised a hammer around the family home.

But after participating in various internship-program activities, including a field trip to Qwest Field, the boy decided he wanted to be an engineer.

After graduating from Washington State University in construction management and landing a \$70,000-a year job, the parents are no longer laughing.

That boy was her son, Ambler said.

Rinehart confirmation moves ahead

The Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee on Thursday recommended confirmation of Nita Rinehart's appointment to the HECB, effective Dec. 29, 2008.

Bills delivered to Governor:

- [ESHB 1694](#) – Addressing fiscal matters for the 2007-2009 biennium.
- [ESSB 5460](#) – Reducing the administrative cost of state government during the 2007-2009 and 2009-2022 fiscal biennia.

Bills in Senate Rules:

- [HB 1312](#) - Eliminating the exclusive authority of the University of Washington and Washington State University to offer certain engineering courses.
- [HB 1394](#) - Changing the timeline for the state comprehensive plan for workforce training and education.
- [SGA 9138](#)- Nita Rinehart

Bills in Senate Committee:

- [2SHB 1025](#) - Requiring disclosure of certain information relating to higher education course materials.
- [SHB 1128](#) – Changing innovation partnership zone provisions.
- [HB 1156](#) - Creating a preference in the alternative route certification program for veterans and National Guard members.
- [SHB 1323](#) - Providing for coordination of workforce and economic development.
- [SHB 1328](#) – Allowing public technical colleges to offer degrees that prepare students to transfer to certain bachelor degree programs.
- [2SHB 1355](#) - Establishing the opportunity internship program for high school students.
- [HB 1395](#) - Clarifying terms for workforce and economic development.
- [HB 1474](#) – Changing border county opportunity program provisions.
- [HB 1487](#) - Regarding resident student classification.
- [HB 1640](#) – Modifying disclosure requirements for private investment information received by the University of Washington consolidated endowment fund.
- [HB 1675](#) – Changing the work experience provisions of the alternative route partnership grant program.
- [SHB 1841](#) – Adding a faculty member to the governing board of each four-year institution of higher education.
- [SHB 1898](#)- Setting priorities for higher education capital projects.

- [SHB 1914](#) – Authorizing the financing of higher education institutions' maintenance and operations through the use of certificates of participation.
- [SHB 1943](#) - Requiring recommendations for preparation and professional development for the early learning and school-age program workforce.
- [2SHB 1946](#) – Regarding higher education online technology.
- [EHB 1986](#) – Authorizing a peer mentoring pilot program at Western Washington University and a community or technical college.
- [E2SHB 2021](#) – Revitalizing student financial aid.
- [HB 2119](#)- Expanding dual credit opportunities.
- [E2SB 2227](#) – Enacting the evergreen jobs act.

Bills on Senate Floor:

- [SGA 9014](#) – Ethelda Burke
- [SGA 9041](#) - Earl Hale

Bills in House Committee

- [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.
- [SSB 5172](#) – Establishing a University of Washington center for human rights.
- [SB 5173](#) - Authorizing the regional universities to confer honorary doctorate degrees.
- [SSB 5177](#) - Creating a global Asia institute within the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies.
- [SSB 5276](#) - Eliminating the exclusive authority of the University of Washington and Washington State University to offer certain engineering courses.
- [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.

- [SSB 5410](#) – Regarding the digital learning commons.
- [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](#) – Regarding lifelong learning accounts.
- [SSB 5734](#) – Making certain current higher education tuition-setting practices permanent.
- [SSB 5776](#) – Regarding student fees, charges and assessments.
- [E2SSB 5809](#) – Revising unemployment compensation and workforce training provisions.
- [E2SSB 5941](#) - Regarding comprehensive education data improvement systems.
- [SSCR 8404](#) – Providing for the 2008-18 state comprehensive plan for workforce training.

Bills in House Rules:

- [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.