

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS



Create Post-Secondary Opportunity Programs

Background

2SHB 1096 creates an Opportunity Grant Program for community and technical colleges that will help students succeed.

Specific Issues

Both employers and employees will benefit from 2SHB 1096. Employers need workers with mid-level skills that require some post-secondary education, but not a bachelor's degree. Unfortunately, finding money to attend the technical programs that offer these skill sets is increasingly difficult for prospective students. In 2006, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges conducted a study and found that financial need was the largest barrier to "increased student access and retention in workforce programs." Because of this, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) implemented an Opportunity Grant Pilot Program. During the course of the program:

- 68 percent of Opportunity Grant participants are parents;
- the average household income for Opportunity Grant participants is less than \$11,000 per year, with an average household size of three;
- 97 percent of students who began in one of the pilot programs remain engaged and on their chosen career pathway;
- Opportunity Grant students are enrolled at all educational levels, from adult basic skills to college-level coursework;
- 51 percent of Opportunity Grant participants are enrolled in healthcare related pathways; and
- more than half of Opportunity Grant participants received a combination of Opportunity Grant awards and other forms of financial aid.

These studies reveal the clear need for educational funding for training provided by community and technical colleges.

Scope of the Bill

Providing funding for qualified students is the right choice for Washington's students, future employees, and employers. The Opportunity Grant Program will let Washingtonians who need jobs and training access that more easily and allow employers to hire them with confidence.

Primary Sponsor:
Representative
Phyllis Kenney

In 2004-2005, more than 470,000 students received funding in the community and technical college systems in Washington State (http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/docs/data/research_reports/academic_reports/ayr2004-05/append_b_hist_0405.pdf, p 9).

In 2004-2005, the community and technical college systems exceeded their biennial performance targets (http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/docs/data/research_reports/performance_reporting/2005-07_performance_reporting_plan.pdf, p 2).

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Grant High School Diplomas to Vietnam Veterans

Background

EHB 1283 would grant high school diplomas to Vietnam veterans who left high school to serve in the armed forces. Precedence was set in 2002 when school districts were allowed to grant high school diplomas to World War II veterans, and again in 2003 when that legislation was expanded to include Korean War veterans as well. Vietnam veterans deserve this privilege for their involvement in the war.

Specific Issues

World War II veterans and Korean War veterans were eligible for high school diplomas if they were:

- Honorably discharged
- Scheduled to graduate from high school between 1940-1955
- Left high school before graduation to serve in either World War II or the Korean War

If this legislation passes, Vietnam veterans who were set to graduate during the conflict but left high school to serve in the armed forces would be able to fill out an application to solicit a high school diploma. Diplomas may be awarded to veterans with a high school equivalency certification and posthumously.

Scope of the Bill

For the men and women who put their lives at risk, and often sacrificed them, giving school districts the power to grant diplomas to those honorably discharged Vietnam veterans is a matter of gratitude and respect for their work and their sacrifice. The Commission on Hispanic Affairs fully supports the passage of EHB 1283.

Primary Sponsor: Representative Dan Roach

As recent events have demonstrated again, veterans often receive neither the respect nor resources they deserve when they return from service.

There was no opposition to EHB 1286 at the public hearing.

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COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS

The Commission on Hispanic Affairs supports HB 1206

Background

HB 1206 will assist low income Hispanics in obtaining affordable automobile liability insurance.

Specific Issues

If you drive a vehicle in Washington State, you are required to have auto insurance. The insurance has to be an auto insurance policy with limits of at least 25,000 of bodily injury or death of one person in any one accident, \$50,000 of bodily injury or death of any two persons in any one accident, and \$10,000 of injury to or destruction of property of others in any one accident. The cost involved in obtaining this mandatory auto insurance is a burden to the low income consumers due to:

- The average cost per year for mandatory insurance is \$838
- Low income consumers usually pay an average of \$50 to \$1,000 more per year in premiums
- The poorest household pays almost one third of their total annual income for mandatory insurance
- The average annual per capita for Hispanic residents is \$13,600
- The average annual per capita for Hispanic migrants is \$8,000

Scope of the Bill

This bill will provide an affordable auto insurance program for Hispanics and other consumers whose income falls below the federal poverty level (150%). For the majority of these people especially those that live in rural areas private; transportation is the only available means of transportation.

Approval of this legislation will undoubtedly protect the public and encourage low income Hispanics and all other low income consumers to buy affordable auto insurance without the need to drop their coverage as soon as their vehicle is registered. It will also lessen the burden of having to choose between insuring their vehicle and purchasing other basic necessities. It will eliminate the traffic infractions for driving without the required insurance coverage, and allow them to continue being productive residents of this state. In many cases a traffic infraction of \$450 dollars is the last thing they need. Many times these households are one citation away from losing their car, house and or having the ability to provide for their family.

Primary Sponsor:
Rep. Chase

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Hispanic population
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In 2000, a quarter of
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COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS



Enhancing Student Learning Opportunities and Student Achievement

Background

HB 1872 will provide a venue for students to develop the knowledge and essential skills needed to become responsible citizens and thus contribute to their own well-being, their families, and their communities. This bill also addresses the need for a well researched curriculum for English Learners and professional development for classroom teachers.

Specific Issues

Kindergarten is an important year for these young children to learn new skills and refine skills that have been introduced at home in order to prepare them to enter first grade engaged and on track. It is evident from the WASL scores that English Learners and students who live in poverty continue to be left behind by our current education system.

Fourth Grade Reading - 46.2% in 2004-05; 50.2% in 2005-06
Fourth Grade Writing - 29.9% in 2004-05; 32.8% in 2005-06
Fourth Grade Math - 25.2% in 2004-05 and 24% in 2005-06

A study completed by Plucker, Eaton, Rapp, Lim, Nowak, Hansen, and Bartleson found that children who completed a full-day kindergarten learned more in literacy and math than those only enrolled in half-day programs. The advantages amounted to about a month of extra learning for full-day kindergartners throughout the year. (2004)

Dr. Paris (personal communication, 9/14/06) said, early success leads to later success for children, known as the Matthew effect. Children who attend full-day kindergarten are able to develop a strong knowledge base early that can carry them throughout school. (Matthew effect has been adopted by Keith Stanovich, a psychologist who has done extensive research on reading and language disabilities. He used the term to describe a phenomenon that has been observed in research on how new readers acquire the skills to read: Early success in acquiring reading skills usually leads to later successes in reading as the learner grows, while failing to learn to read before the 3rd & 4th year of schooling may be indicative of life-long problems in learning new skills.

In lower income communities, there is often a mismatch of teachers and families in terms of educational background and ethnicity, which can be negative. In order to counteract this mismatch, more teachers that share the same ethnicity as their students need to be hired in order to improve the academic achievement of ELL students.

Scope of the Bill

Minority students, unfortunately, too often begin their school lacking the necessary "academic growth" and consequently are behind from the very beginning. One way to counteract these setbacks is to have the option of a Full-Day Kindergarten class with well researched curriculum for English Learners and professional development for classroom teachers that can lay a strong foundation and in addition be an important intervention to provide extra literacy support for these children.

Primary Sponsor:
Sharon Tomiko Santos

37% of Hispanic/Latino families live in poverty and large racial gaps exist in socioeconomic conditions (Future of Children, Brookings Institute)

Children enrolled in full-day programs receive 40-50% more instruction than children in half-day programs. (Plucker, et al., 2004)

Full-Day programs have long term benefits as demonstrated by higher achievement in later grades in both math and reading. (Plucker, et al., 2004)

Companion Bill:
SB5841

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LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

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Notifying parents, guardians, and custodians when a juvenile is taken into custody

Background

HB 1010 will require law enforcement to make a reasonable attempt to notify a child's parent, guardian, or custodian when the child is taken into custody and is being held.

Specific Issues

A law enforcement officer may make an investigatory stop even though the officer lacks probable cause to believe that a suspect is involved in criminal activity. Latino youth are disproportionately represented in the justice system and face disparate treatment at every stage of the justice system. If a juvenile is held in custody by law enforcement for questioning, there is not a legal requirement to notify the juvenile's parents that the juvenile is in custody or where he or she is being held. How does it affect the Latino community?

- The psychological trauma parents face not knowing where their children are can have a long lasting negative effect and contribute to distrust in the justice system
- Latino youth are often unfairly targeted for police stops, arrested, detained, waived to adult criminal court, and sentenced to serve longer periods of time than their non-Hispanic counterparts
- As a result, Latino youth are significantly overrepresented and receive harsher treatment than White youth, even when charged for the same types of offenses

Scope of the Bill

HB 1010 will require that, when a law enforcement officer takes a juvenile into custody, a reasonable attempt must be made to notify a parent, guardian, or custodian that the juvenile is in custody and where the juvenile is being held. Parents have a fundamental interest and right to know if their child has been taken into police custody for questioning and where their child is being held.

Primary Sponsor:
Rep. Jim Moeller

There are a number of fundamental principles underlying any approach to issues of juvenile justice, many of which are common to basic human right standards for all people. For children deprived of their liberty it includes:

Immediate notification of parents or guardians upon apprehension of a juvenile and the right of the child to be in contact with his or her family

Unicef Factsheet: Children deprived of their Liberty and Juvenile Justice

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*Legislative Testimony in support of HB1010 by Richard Diaz 3/20/2007
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LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS

The Commission on Hispanic Affairs Supports HB 1027

Background

HB 1027 will enforce the liability in accounting for internet lending and fraud.

With profits at stake, the payday lending industry is making itself seem consumer friendly; misrepresenting the facts and evading state laws. A survey of one hundred Internet payday loan sites conducted by the Consumer Federation of America (CFA) found that small loans require electronic access to consumers' checking accounts; which poses a high risk to consumers who transmit personal financial information via the Internet to borrow money.

Specific Issues

Disadvantaged consumers are often the victims of consumer fraud; low-income Latino immigrants are especially likely to be victims due to their lack of English proficiency and inexperience in the local marketplace.

Specific Issues

The Center for Responsible Lending, a national non-profit, nonpartisan research and policy organization that promotes responsible lending practices, states that only 1% of payday loans are made to one time borrowers. Nearly all loans have to be "flipped" or renewed; consequently requiring another fee and additional interest is accrued on the original amount owed. This cycle can repeat many times over for low-income people who are living paycheck to paycheck and who are unable to pay the full amount on short term loans of this type.

Scope of the Bill

The bill will enforce provisions regarding fraud and unlicensed internet lending specifically on screening of the check cashing process and the selling of loans. This bill will help protect the Latino community from deception and thus insure that their lack of English proficiency or experience with the local marketplace will not be a drawback.

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COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS



Expand High School Completion Programs

Background

HB 1051 will benefit the Hispanic community twofold: it will assist Hispanics under the age of twenty-one, who seek to earn their diploma, in obtaining access to education and instill confidence in those high achieving Hispanic students who enter the work force. The benefits of getting a High School diploma are immense; therefore, the standard time to acquire it should be extended.

Specific Issues

It is essential to the economy, government service providers, and the education system of this state that we provide opportunities for citizens to live productive lives. This, however, cannot be a reality if our citizens do not possess a diploma. It is vital and beneficial for students to receive their diplomas before enrolling in higher education. College Board's report titled *Education Pays, 2004* states that:

- The typical bachelor's degree recipient can expect to earn about 73% more over a 40 year working life than the typical high school graduate earns over the same period
- Average lifetime earnings for individuals with associate degrees are almost 25 percent higher than average lifetime earnings for high school graduates
- Average lifetime earnings for doctoral degree recipients are between two and a half and three times as high as average lifetime earnings for high school graduates and average lifetime earnings for professional-degree recipients are even higher (Baum & Payea, 2004).

Scope of the Bill

Finding a solution to the large percentage of children, especially minorities; that are not attaining a diploma is definitely a challenge to educators. HB 1051; however, will help eliminate the adverse affects on the individual by allowing them an opportunity to enroll in specified courses before age twenty-one and thus allow them to further their academic and professional goals through the completion of the certificate of academic achievement. Failure to obtain a high school diploma has adverse affects not only on the individual but the community as well.

Primary Sponsor:
Representative
Dave Upthegrove

68% Graduated from High School in 2005 according to the US Health Foundation

The number of Hispanics enrolled within the Washington Public School system has increased 250% over the past twenty years (OSPI Latino Education Project). In 2005 134,502 Hispanics made up 12% of the student body within schools in Washington (OSPI Enrollment Comparisons). Hispanics however, have just a 54% on time graduation rate (Class of 2004, OSPI).

Extend the amount of time a student has to complete the certificate of academic achievement to fulfill diploma requirements

Companion Bill:

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Access to Health Care Services for Children

Background

The obesity epidemic in Washington State presents many issues; however, access to adequate health care and nutrition and physical activity guidelines for K-12 students can prevent obesity and obesity-related illnesses and preserve the health of Washington State's future generations.

Specific Issues

Study after study has shown that obesity rates among children are skyrocketing. Similarly, studies have also confirmed the link between obesity and lack of adequate health care and education around such issues. The communities that suffer the most from this two-fold threat are lower income families that cannot sustain the health care needs of their children. HB 1071's expectation is to improve this circumstance by standardizing the income eligibility of the three programs that provide health care to low income children (Medicaid, State children's Health Insurance Program, and the Children's Health Program) at 250% of the Federal Poverty Level and establish outreach efforts to enroll eligible children. It also directs K-12 districts to have school health advisory boards, and by 2010, to serve only healthy foods and beverages, and provide children with at least 30 minutes of physical education per day. These steps serve to *preserve* the health of our children, and *prevent* obesity and obesity-related disorders from impeding our children's learning and endangering their lives.

Scope of the Bill

In addition, HB 1071 will provide incentives to health care providers by linking rate increases to quality measure improvement measures and allowing children and their parents to enroll in employer sponsored health insurance programs regardless of open enrollment standards. These measures are necessary and serve the greater good of Washington State by creating a healthier community in which to live and raise children.

Primary Sponsor: Representative Judy Clibborn

The Centers of Disease Control found that in 2004, 30% of children ages 6 to 11 are overweight, and fifteen percent are obese.

For adolescents ages 12 to 19, 30% are overweight and 16% are obese.

Adverse health effects associated with overweight in children and adolescents include: asthma, diabetes, hypertension, orthopedic complications, and psychosocial effects and stigma.

Companion Bill: HB 5093

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Passport to College Promise Program

Background

HB 1131 will provide information on post-secondary education and scholarship opportunities for youth currently in foster care. Provisions of this bill will benefit everyone including the Hispanic community. Eligible former foster youth between ages 16 and 26 will also have an opportunity to apply for this very important and essential benefit.

Specific Issues

According to the Administration for Children and Families in Seattle, WA, at present, there are approximately 203 Hispanics in foster care ranging from ages 15 through 18 years of age that could potentially qualify for assistance. As the Hispanic population continues to increase, it is inevitable that the number of Hispanic youth in foster care will increase as well. HB 1131 will provide the financial resources to fund education for foster care youth and thereby lessen the risk of continuing the cycle of poverty that frequently plagues them. Studies have shown that former foster youth are much more susceptible to experience, unemployment, homelessness and incarceration; never fully realizing their full potential and the opportunity to be economically successful. HB 1131 will greatly improve the educational opportunities for the foster care youth of this state through this essential and much needed resource.

Scope of the Bill

HB 1131 will provide and facilitate higher education funding opportunities for our foster youth as they transition from foster care to post-secondary education and adulthood.

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Hans Dunshee

34% of 18 year-old youth in Washington State foster care graduate from high school. (Children's Alliance)

Only 16% completed a vocational degree; more than one in five experienced homelessness after leaving foster care. (Casey Family Programs)

In Washington State about 400 children at year "age out" of foster care, meaning they turn 18 years old without having been adopted or reunited with their birth families. (Washington Education Foundation, 2006)

Companion Bill: SB 5155

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Temporary Graduation Provisions For Students not meeting Mathematical Standards

Background

HB1194 permits students in the classes of 2008, 2009, and 2010 to graduate from high school without obtaining a Certificate of Academic Achievement or Certificate of Individual Achievement if they meet certain criteria: a) have passed all required portions of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning except mathematics; b) continue to retake the WASL annually until graduation; c) meet other graduation requirements; and d) successfully earn additional credits in mathematics.

Specific Issues

Hispanics comprise one of the fastest growing minority population in Washington State and the nation. We undoubtedly have to be positioned and prepared for today's job market; a market where higher education is a must. It is; therefore, crucial that we make every effort to increase the numbers of Hispanics who complete high school and pursue college. Unless legislative action is taken immediately:

- 2008 will be a disastrous and damaging year for many Hispanic students; primarily high school seniors
- Statistical data provided by OSPI, indicates that only 25.4% of 10th grade Hispanics students passed the math portion of the WASL in 2005-2006
- Data based on the projected number of Hispanics graduating in 2007 may very well be as low as 25%
- Failure of the upcoming WASL tests will have a long lasting negative impact on the Hispanic community and the state thus contributing to higher dropout and unemployment rates
- The alarming 7% low rate of Hispanic students entering college compared to 76% of whites will continue (Green & Winters, 2005)

Scope of the Bill

This bill provides a practical solution to a potential crisis that may very well affect up to 75% of the Hispanic students of Class 2008. HB1194 will help establish a viable option for the numerous students needing a second chance to further their academic and professional goals. Failure of this extremely important and essential bill will have long lasting repercussions on the individual, community, and the state.

Primary Sponsor:
Rep. McDermott

The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) scores for Hispanic students continue to lag behind the state average.

The Hispanic 10th Grade WASL score averages for 2005-2006 are as follows:
Reading - 62.5%,
Math - 25.4%,
Writing - 59.9%,
Science - 14.0%
All three main subjects - 21.8%.
(Class of 2000-2006, OSPI).

Companion Bill:
SB 5165

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LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS

The Commission on Hispanic Affairs supports SB 6024

Background

SB 6024 will assist low income Hispanics in obtaining affordable automobile liability insurance.

Specific Issues

If you drive a vehicle in Washington State, you are required to have auto insurance. The insurance has to be an auto insurance policy with limits of at least 25,000 of bodily injury or death of one person in any one accident, \$50,000 of bodily injury or death of any two persons in any one accident, and \$10,000 of injury to or destruction of property of others in any one accident. The cost involved in obtaining this mandatory auto insurance is a burden to the low income consumers due to:

- The average cost per year for mandatory insurance is \$838
- Low income consumers usually pay an average of \$50 to \$1,000 more per year in premiums
- The poorest household pays almost one third of their total annual income for mandatory insurance
- The average annual per capita for Hispanic residents is \$13,600
- The average annual per capita for Hispanic migrants is \$8,000

Scope of the Bill

This bill will provide an affordable auto insurance program for Hispanics and other consumers whose income falls below the federal poverty level (150%). For the majority of these people especially those that live in rural areas private; transportation is the only available means of transportation.

Approval of this legislation will undoubtedly protect the public and encourage low income Hispanics and all other low income consumers to buy affordable auto insurance without the need to drop their coverage as soon as their vehicle is registered. It will also lessen the burden of having to choose between insuring their vehicle and purchasing other basic necessities. It will eliminate the traffic infractions for driving without the required insurance coverage, and allow them to continue being productive residents of this state. In many cases a traffic infraction of \$450 dollars is the last thing they need. Many times these households are one citation away from losing their car, house and or having the ability to provide for their family.

Primary Sponsor:
Senator Rosa Franklin

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Hispanic population
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Over half of the
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Improved Access to Higher Education for Latinos

Background

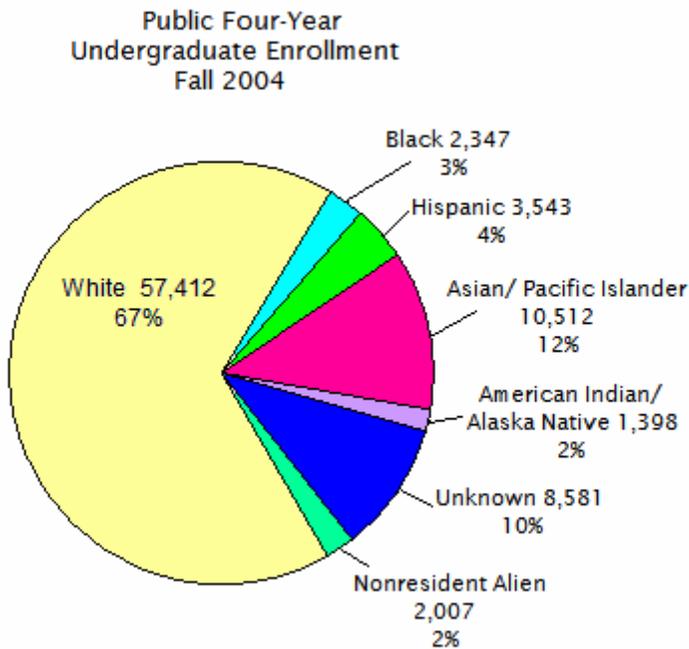
The Commission of Hispanic Affairs supports the development, enhancement, and expansion of strategies/proposals for helping Latino students achieve higher academic levels.

Specific Issues

Hispanics/Latinos are more likely than other ethnic groups to enter the workforce after High School graduation and forego the pursuit of higher education (OSPI Washington State Graduate Follow-up Study (GFUS), class of 2004). In 2004, only 15% of Washington Hispanics/Latinos who obtained a high school diploma enrolled in a four year university. A mere 3.9% of Washington Public four-year university enrollment and 4.7% of independent four-year university enrollment was Hispanic/Latino. These percentages are far from being equal to the overall population increase of Hispanics/Latinos in Washington State. Retention and graduation rates within these higher education institutes are also low.

Primary Sponsor:
Senator Ken Jacobson

- Increase awareness of the challenges facing the Latino community
- Develop programs to encourage and promote accessible and affordable higher education to Hispanic/Latino students
- Provide financial aid and or funding and support to help Latinos enroll in and graduate from Washington State institutions of higher education



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Monitor Pesticide Drift in Agricultural Areas

Background

SHB 1810 is important to the health and well being of Hispanic/Latino communities as well as others that live and work in the agricultural field. Hispanic/Latinos make up a large percentage of the agricultural industry workforce; sixty-five percent of the Hispanic/Latinos in the lower Yakima Valley alone work in the fields. (State of the State of Hispanics, Whitman College, 2005) Workers who deal directly with pesticide laden plants are at risk, as well as those who live in areas where pesticide “drift” occurs. Studies continue to reveal the philosophical health implications of prolonged exposure to pesticides. It is essential that the State of Washington, in conjunction with other community partners, collect information on the amount of pesticides in these agricultural areas to protect Washington farm workers and their families.

Specific Issues

Pesticide drift refers to the off target migration of pesticides. Drift occurs during or after application through volatilization or by the wind moving contaminated dust. Additionally, microscopic droplets of pesticides can stay suspended in the air until picked up by clothing or air currents. Moreover, harmful pesticides have a number of routes in which to affect the health of those in agricultural areas. According to the Pesticide Incident Reporting and Tracking (PIRT) Review Panel some of the health effects of pesticides are:

- Abdominal pain
- Neurological damage
- Vision problems
- Multiple Cancers
- Death

Scope of the Bill

Monitoring pesticide use in Washington State’s agricultural areas must begin immediately to protect the health of its residents. It is also a first step toward finding a lasting solution that will benefit workers, residents, and commercial growers. SHB 1810 does not impose any regulations on farmers; simply, it asks the state to partner with other community organizations to begin monitoring the air for pesticides.

Primary Sponsor: Representative Zack Hudgins

Concentrated population centers are moving closer to agricultural areas every year.

According to the Department of Health, 76% of reported cases of pesticide poisoning were classified as definitely, probably, or possibly positive poisoning cases.

In 2004, the last year that the Department of Health has posted data, 85% of the definite, probable, and possible cases of pesticide poisoning were classified as *mild*, 14% as *moderate*, and 1% as *severe*.

(Source: Washington State Department of Health’s summary of pesticide-related investigations during 2004, p47-49 <www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/PIRT/pirt2005ar/pirt2005he6.pdf>)

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LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS

The Commission on Hispanic Affairs supports SHB 1206

Primary Sponsor:
Rep. Chase

Background

SHB 1206 will assist low income Hispanics in obtaining affordable automobile liability insurance.

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Specific Issues

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Fourth Grade Math - 25.2% in 2004-05 and 24% in 2005-06

A study completed by Plucker, Eaton, Rapp, Lim, Nowak, Hansen, and Bartleson found that children who completed a full-day kindergarten learned more in literacy and math than those only enrolled in half-day programs. The advantages amounted to about a month of extra learning for full-day kindergartners throughout the year. (2004)

Dr. Paris (personal communication, 9/14/06) said, early success leads to later success for children, known as the Matthew effect. Children who attend full-day kindergarten are able to develop a strong knowledge base early that can carry them throughout school. (Matthew effect has been adopted by Keith Stanovich, a psychologist who has done extensive research on reading and language disabilities. He used the term to describe a phenomenon that has been observed in research on how new readers acquire the skills to read: Early success in acquiring reading skills usually leads to later successes in reading as the learner grows, while failing to learn to read before the 3rd & 4th year of schooling may be indicative of life-long problems in learning new skills.

In lower income communities, there is often a mismatch of teachers and families in terms of educational background and ethnicity, which can be negative. In order to counteract this mismatch, more teachers that share the same ethnicity as their students need to be hired in order to improve the academic achievement of ELL students.

Scope of the Bill

Minority students, unfortunately, too often begin their school lacking the necessary "academic growth" and consequently are behind from the very beginning. One way to counteract these setbacks is to have the option of a Full-Day Kindergarten class with well researched curriculum for English Learners and professional development for classroom teachers that can lay a strong foundation and in addition be an important intervention to provide extra literacy support for these children.

Primary Sponsor: House Committee on Education

37% of Hispanic/Latino families live in poverty and large racial gaps exist in socioeconomic conditions (Future of Children, Brookings Institute)

Children enrolled in full-day programs receive 40-50% more instruction than children in half-day programs. (Plucker, et al., 2004)

Full-Day programs have long term benefits as demonstrated by higher achievement in later grades in both math and reading. (Plucker, et al., 2004)

Companion Bill: SB5841

The people of the State of Washington have tasked the Commission on Hispanic Affairs with advising the Governor, the Legislature, and state and local agencies on issues that affect the Latino community of the State.

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS



Real ID Act

Background

The REAL ID Act would make it more difficult for Latinos and immigrants to lead safe and productive lives in the Washington State. The attack on their rights and liberties would further chip away at the rights and liberties of their friends and neighbors. It does not make us safer and comes at a great cost to millions – both citizens and non-citizens..

Specific Issues

The REAL ID Act requires all states to restrict access to drivers' licenses by requiring them to ask applicants for proof of their lawful presence in the United States. These provisions undermine national security by pushing people into the shadows triggering an increase in fraudulent identification documents. Consequently, these provisions make us less safe and do not effectively prevent future terrorist attacks. The 9/11 hijackers all entered the United States with legal documents that were obtained fraudulently. Their drivers' licenses were issued based on what appeared to be valid forms of identification and residency. Denying undocumented immigrant's drivers' licenses will not prevent future terrorists from boarding planes or using passports.

Additionally, denying undocumented immigrant's drivers' licenses makes us less safe. Currently, there are an estimated 517,055 Hispanic/Latinos in Washington State, many of whom have to drive on WA State roads to work, whether or not they have a driver's license. This law causes these drivers not to participate in drivers' education classes or drivers' tests, to be unable to get insurance, and to be more likely to flee the scene of an accident.

Immigrants are a strong and valuable part of the social fabric of Washington State. Our economy lives and breathes through agriculture, an industry in which at least 60 percent of the workforce is immigrant labor.

It is also possible that undocumented immigrants would have a driver's license that singles them out as well. This type of system opens the door to widespread discrimination and civil rights violations.

Scope of the Bill

SSB 5087 prohibits the state from implementing Real ID unless it is funded by the federal government and includes privacy protections. The Real ID Act of 2005 creates a federal identity document that every American will need in order to fly on commercial airlines, enter government buildings, open a bank account, and more.

Primary Sponsor:
Senator Haugen

With 34,000 farms operating on more than 15 million acres, Washington is a major agricultural state

Sixty-five percent of the Hispanics/Latinos in the lower Yakima Valley work in agriculture.

Washington ranks first in the U.S. for production of 11 commodities, including apples, sweet cherries, pears, hops and red raspberries.

The people of the State of Washington have tasked the Commission on Hispanic Affairs with advising the Governor, the Legislature, and state and local agencies on issues that affect the Latino community of the State.

Legislative Testimony for SSB 5087, prepared by Richard Diaz 3/20/2007

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LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS



Appropriate Access to Health Services for Children

Background

Bill SSB 5093 will undeniably benefit the Latino Community in that it will contribute to the health and welfare improvement of their children. Inadequate health services for children equates to inferior care for children. These children are more likely to receive no or delayed care than insured children, which increases their risk of hospitalization for conditions that could have been treated earlier without hospitalization. In addition, they are less likely to have a medical home. One study reveals that uninsured children without adequate health services are 25% more likely to miss school than the insured children. Passing this bill will thus provide preventive health services, management of behavioral health and childhood diseases and healthy students. The commission strongly supports a system that is culturally and linguistically competent, affordable, prevention-oriented, and accessible to all children.

Specific Issues

- Children without health insurance are more likely to receive little or no medical care or receive it too late. All Children should be eligible to receive basic health services.
- Communication barriers and cultural differences between health care providers and Hispanic/Latino patients can reduce treatment adherence and compromise overall disease management (National Pharmaceutical Council, 2004).
- Hispanics are less likely to receive or use medications for asthma, cardiovascular disease, HIV/AIDS, mental illness, and pain (*Genes, Culture, and Medicines: Bridging Gaps in Treatment for Hispanic Americans*, 2004).

Scope of the Bill

SB 5093 will bring appropriate health services to children and will improve the health and welfare of children in Washington. It will prevent poor health and illness in children and change parent's perception of the value of health care and their willingness to take their children to needed care.

Primary Sponsor:
Senator Chris Marr

Latino Children are not receiving the basic health care that they need. Their parents either cannot afford it or are uninformed of the accessible children health services due to language/cultural barriers.

Accessible health care promotes healthy lifestyles.

Per the Institute of Medicine (OIM), the health problems that lead to developmental and education losses for children are a substantial cost to society.

Companion Bill:

The people of the State of Washington have tasked the Commission on Hispanic Affairs with advising the Governor, the Legislature, and state and local agencies on issues that affect the Latino community of the State.



Guaranteed Tuition Scholarship Program

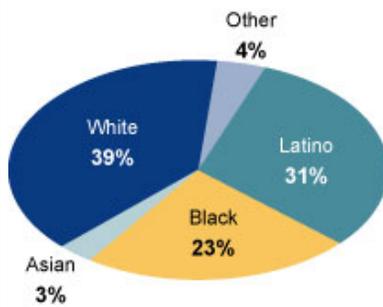
Background

SSB 5098 will provide bright hard working students from low and middle income families the opportunity to consider and pursue higher education. The high cost of tuition coupled with the complexity of finding and applying for financial aid tends to discourage and prevent accomplished students from entering college.

Specific Issues

According to the Pew Hispanic Center 2004 press release, most Hispanics (54%) feel that young people starting out today have little chance of success without a college degree. Knowing this, it is not surprising that nearly all Hispanic parents (95%) say it is very important to them that their children go to college. When asked, a large majority of Hispanics say that the cost of tuition (77%) and the need to work and earn money (77%) are both major reasons why people do not go to college or fail to finish once they have started. Whites and African Americans responded similarly on tuition (82% and 82%) and on the need to work (73% and 76%).

Children living in low-income families, by race/ethnicity, 2005



Scope of the Bill

SSB 5098 will undoubtedly inspire and encourage students from low and middle income families and those that may be the first in their family to attend college to stay connected in the education system and go beyond high school.

Primary Sponsor:
Senator
Phil Rockefeller

26% of children in low-income families—7.3 million—live with parents who have less than a high school education. (NCCP)

36% of children in low-income families—10.2 million—live with parents who have only a high school diploma. (NCCP)

39% of children in low-income families—10.9 million—live with parents who have some college or more. (NCCP)

Companion Bill:

The people of the State of Washington have tasked the Commission on Hispanic Affairs with advising the Governor, the Legislature, and state and local agencies on issues that affect the Latino community of the State.