

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6112

---

As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Labor, Commerce & Trade, January 24, 1996

**Title:** An act relating to costs allowed for vocational rehabilitation benefits.

**Brief Description:** Increasing allowable costs for vocational rehabilitation.

**Sponsors:** Senator Wojahn.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Labor, Commerce & Trade: 1/15/96, 1/24/96 [DPS].

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & TRADE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6112 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Pelz, Chair; Heavey, Vice Chair; Franklin, Fraser and Wojahn.

**Staff:** Jack Brummel (786-7428)

**Background:** Under the state workers compensation system, vocational rehabilitation expenditures may not exceed \$3,000 in any 52-week period. An additional 52-week period may be granted with the approval of the Director of the Department of Labor and Industries.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Vocational rehabilitation benefits are increased to \$10,000 in any 104-week period. An additional 52-week period may be granted with the approval of the Director of the Department of Labor and Industries.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The original bill was not considered.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 10, 1996.

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

**Testimony For:** The state payment for vocational rehabilitation has not kept up with inflation. Time-loss expenses can be cut through use of vocational services.

**Testimony Against:** We should hold off on this until we get claims management under control.

**Testified:** PRO: Senator Wojahn, prime sponsor; Julie Grant, Grant Co.; Robby Stern, WA State Labor Council; CON: Clif Finch, AWB; Dave Ducharme, WA Self-Insurers Association.