

SUBJECT: Career education

COMMITTEE: Public Education: favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes--Atkinson, Blanton, Haley, Barton, Evans, Fox,
Glossbrenner, L. Hall

0 nays

0 present, not voting

3 absent--Bryant, Hanna, Peveto

WITNESSES: For--Ken Johnson, Texas Austin Industries; Elvis Arterbury,
teacher, Dallas I.S.D.; Douglas Johnson, Texas Associa-
tion of Business; and Karen Abernathy, consultant and
writer. Also stating their support of the bill were
Kent King, Association of Texas Professional Educators;
and Ramon Bynum, Texas Education Agency.

Against--None

SENATE VOTE: On motion to suspend rules on SB 273 (Vale).
12 ayes, 16 nays (Andujar, Blake, Brown, Glasgow, Harris,
Howard, Jones, Leedom, Meier, Mengden, Ogg, Richards,
Sarpalius, Short, Travis, Wilson.)

DIGEST: The bill would direct the State Board of Education of implement
a statewide career education program. School districts
would develop their own programs, which would be screened
by the Texas Education Agency. Districts could annually
receive up to \$2,000 plus 50 cents per pupil in average
daily attendance. Total state spending could not exceed
\$6,907,980 per biennium.

SUPPORTERS

SAY:

One of the greatest services the state could do for its
students, and for Texas business and industry, would be to
adequately prepare the state's youth for the world of
work. The employment choices available to young people
are increasingly broad and complex. Students need solid
help in understanding what jobs are available and how these
relate to the courses they are taking. When students ask
why they are taking a particular course, a teacher should
be able to show how the course relates to future job choices.
Unfortunately, many teachers are isolated from the world
of business and industry and cannot adequately answer such
questions. A statewide career education program would stress
teacher education and materials to supplement it, thus
meeting a statewide need.

School districts that already have instituted career education,
using a combination of local and federal funds, have reported
very positive results from such programs.

SUPPORTERS
SAY (cont):

Career education has been a priority of the State Board of Education since 1972 and programs have been carefully studied and tested by the Texas Education Agency. Also, the TEA has tested Texas students and found them lacking in crucial career education skills. The House Committee on Public Education has called career education a program that "literally pays for itself" and stated that implementation of a program is "vital." Federal funds for career education are dwindling; it is time the state took action. This bill would appropriate no funds, but would set the stage for an amendment to the appropriations bill for funding of a much-needed program.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

This is just another case of the federal government getting local districts "hooked" on a program and then taking away funds and leaving the state holding the bag. Texas got more than \$1 million in federal funds for career education in 1979 and about \$784,000 last year. Only about \$500,000 is expected for 1981. The state is being asked not only to take up the slack, but to fund a huge statewide effort costing more than \$3.4 million a year. If local districts want career education they should create imaginative programs using local funds and in-kind and financial contributions from local businesses and industry. This would forge a solid link between schools and local work places that would benefit all concerned.

Similar legislation has been rejected during two previous sessions: In 1977, a House subcommittee removed funding provisions from a career education bill, and in 1979 Rep. Blanton got his bill passed by the House, but the Senate killed it. Introducing the bill without any funding provision this session is a back-door approach. The Legislature should be very wary of bills like this that will further strain the state's limited financial resources. The sponsor of the Senate companion bill has conceded that the bill is as good as dead because of the spending requirement.