

Statement by Dr. Garrett Heyns, Olympia; President of Southwestern Washington State College Committee, at joint public hearing of Senate and House Committees on Higher Education, in House Chamber, 7:30 p.m., February 15, 1967.

Senator Sandison, Representative Lynch,  
and Distinguished Legislators:

Not since the early days of statehood has the Legislature of the State of Washington been called upon to make such an important decision on higher education as that which is being considered here tonight.

We are directing our attention to the constitutional proposition which commits us to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within the state.

But this decision is part of a larger problem that confronts not only the legislature of this state, but the legislatures of every state in the Union. That is the problem of upgrading state government to regain its rightful place as a partner in our federal system of government.

We submit that the problems of higher education and upgrading of state government are intertwined and that the legislative committees here tonight are, in fact, dealing with both problems.

The evidence seems compelling that a decision must be made during this session of the legislature for a new four-year state college here, at the seat of government.

The Temporary Advisory Council on Public Higher Education has amply substantiated its recommendation that a new state college be established in time to admit a freshman class in the fall of 1969.

I think it should be repeated, for emphasis, however, that the projections of this Blue Ribbon Committee show that by 1975 - in just eight short years - we will have almost 17,000 more college students than we can accommodate in the existing colleges and universities, both public and private.

The estimate is considered conservative since it was made before the Boeing Company won the design competition for the supersonic transport and announced that it would be produced - when authorized - at the Renton plant . . . on the Olympia side of Seattle.

The critical need for a new college will exist even though the three state colleges increase their enrollments by 34.7 per cent over 1965 . . . even though the two state universities increase their enrollments by 34.2 per cent . . . even though the community colleges increase their enrollment by 122.6 per cent . . . and even though the private colleges and universities increase their enrollments by 36.3 per cent.

This shortage of college space and facilities will be even more acute when the Viet Nam war ends, and thousands of additional young men march back to college classrooms under provisions of the GI Bill of Rights.

After concluding that a new college was urgently needed, the Temporary Advisory Council systematically set about the task of determining where it should be located to best serve the State of Washington - the people of the state - and the young men and women seeking higher education.

The 1965 Legislature very wisely decided that the decision should not be a political one, depending upon which area of the state may have the most votes. To preclude it from becoming a political decision, the Legislature provided, by law, that the non-legislative members of the Temporary Advisory Council would decide where the college should be located.

This group - which included the presidents of eight college and universities - established 22 criteria on location and applied them to 21 different areas of the state.

These criteria - or yardsticks - measured and compared every conceivable factor from population projections to mail and telephone service. After months of research, analyzation and study, the Council concluded that the best location for a new state college would be here, in Thurston County.

We agree. And we hope that you, the elected representatives of the people of this state, will agree, and authorize the college recommended by this Blue Ribbon Committee.

A college here would have a tremendous advantage over any other location because the seat of state government is here.

In my opening remarks I indicated that the decision to establish a college was intertwined with general problems of state government.

In these days when we hear so much about the need for upgrading state government, we have a marvelous opportunity to advance that cause with a state college here in Thurston County.

The college would help state government . . . and state government would help the college. It would be a happy union of capital and college campuses.

The college could provide the trained personnel and research facilities needed to help solve problems facing the legislative and executive branches of state government.

State facilities already available could be used as "laboratories" to expose students to practical experiences in political science ... public administration ... economics ... the social sciences ... highway engineering ... law enforcement and traffic safety ... tax administration ... natural resources management ... institutional administration ... and a multitude of other major fields of endeavor

A college here would enrich state government with a new vitality that would flow through government channels to the people in all parts of the state.

Conversely, state government would enrich the educational program by affording opportunities for student and faculty interaction with legislators, heads of executive departments, state agencies and institutions.

We need highly trained people to run this complex government of ours and keep it strong so it can retain its rightful place in our federal system. If we don't do the job at the state level, the federal government will move in and fill the vacuum.

The Speaker of the California Assembly, Jesse M. Unruh, was quoted in a recent magazine article on the need for professionally trained

people in state government.

He said - and I quote - "If we cannot generate thinking in state government, then we cannot survive."

In a speech in Seattle last May, Speaker Unruh said the greatest need of state legislatures is for qualified staff assistants.

Where do you get them? From state colleges at the seat of government where students can receive first hand training and experience.

Despite this heavy demand for college-trained personnel, there is no state college here to train people for government careers and political leadership.

Letters from directors of major state departments in Olympia report the same thing: a need for qualified, well-trained professional help in public administration. These letters, endorsing the recommendation of the Thurston County location, are on file and available for your inspection.

The Temporary Advisory Council pointed out in its recommendation that "The Olympia zone is truly unique in fulfilling the requirement of proximity to a complex industrial center and to the seat of state government as well."

The huge Boeing expansion program in the Renton, Auburn and Kent industrial complex is less than an hour away on the recently opened Interstate 5 freeway. And Boeing has announced that the supersonic transport - when it is authorized - will be produced at the Renton plant, on the Olympia side of Seattle.

But our concern here tonight is for a four-year academic college to serve the entire state for many years to come. We are not talking about a vocational-technical school to train workers for expanding industries. These training programs can best be handled by community colleges already in the areas of industrial expansion.

A four-year state college in Olympia would, however, be in an unique position to serve thousands of graduates of community colleges who want to continue their academic studies.

The Capital City is at the hub of community colleges at Port Angeles and Bremerton on the North ... Centralia, Longview and Vancouver on the South ... Aberdeen-Hoquiam on the West ... and Tacoma, Clover Park, and Auburn on the East. All but two are within an hour's driving time of Olympia on modern highways and freeways, enabling them to serve as "feeder" colleges to a four-year institution in the Capital City.

Olympia lies at the cross roads of the state's main north-south freeway, Interstate 5, and the major east-west highway between the ocean beaches and the Seattle-Tacoma area.

Thus a college in this area would be centrally located for thousands of students in Southwestern Washington -- where there is no state college -- and at the same time be close enough to the heavily populated Puget Sound area to relieve the ever-increasing enroll-

The private institution of higher education in this area, Saint Martin's College, has endorsed the recommendation for a Thurston County site for the new state college. The President of Saint Martin's, Father Michael Feeney, who serves on the Board of Advisors for the Olympia state college, foresees interaction of faculty and students with mutual benefit to both schools ... all without competition since their missions and programs are not the same.

Even if the missions and programs were the same - which they are not - there still would be more students than could be accommodated. The Temporary Advisory Council found that by 1975 the 30-mile area around Olympia will contain 23,100 potential college students. Of this number, an estimated 9,400 will attend two private colleges in Tacoma and Saint Martins, and 4,700 will attend community colleges. This will leave 9,000 other students for whom there will be no college in the area -- unless we build a new state college here.

If we disregard the private colleges, which are out of range tuition-wise for many students, by 1975 the Olympia 30-mile zone will contain 12,500 college-potential students unserved by a four-year state institution.

In addition to the endorsement by the President and Board of Regents of Saint Martin's College, representatives from Vancouver, Longview, Aberdeen, Centralia, and Olympia signed a resolution last March recommending that the next four-year state college be located in Southwestern Washington.



The facilities and environment of the capital city, with its atmosphere so conducive to study and research, would permit the educational processes to be carried on with maximum effectiveness.

Located between two metropolitan centers, Olympia offers relaxed living away from congested areas, but still near enough to participate in activities of either city, an advantage for attracting and retaining an excellent faculty.

The location and atmosphere of the capital city ... the opportunity to observe and participate in state government ... the stimulation of associating with state leaders ... the high intellectual level of the community ... its cultural eminence ... and its numerous recreational facilities on both salt and fresh water provide maximum advantages for attracting faculty and administration personnel.

There are ski level to sea level recreational facilities from Mount Rainier National Park to the Pacific Ocean beaches; with other facilities at Olympia's doorstep, including inland waterways of Puget Sound, more than a dozen fresh water lakes, state and city parks, golf courses and stables.

There are many opportunities for students to work part-time and during summer months for state government and Olympia businesses.

Our Committee has not recommended any particular parcel of land for the four-year college. We agree with the Temporary Advisory Council that the selection of a specific site should be left to



the Board of Trustees of the new college. The board undoubtedly will engage competent architects, engineers, soil experts and others to find the best site in the county for the college.

We also agree with the Temporary Advisory Council that a free site is not necessarily the best site for a college. We do, however, have the pledge of a 630-acre site that will be made available without charge if the college board of trustees want it. It is an excellent, easily developed site, offered by the Port of Olympia. It is near the airport ... adjacent to the state's main north-south freeway, Interstate 5 ... and near the east-west freeway between Tacoma and Aberdeen. The Olympia airport, incidentally, is served on a regularly scheduled basis by West Coast Airlines. If the Board of Trustees does not want the free site, half a dozen other tracts of 600 or more acres are available at reasonable prices.

We who have been active in supporting the Olympia location believe the decision to establish a new four-year college during this legislative session is of the utmost urgency.

It cannot be delayed.

No area of governmental responsibility has been as closely associated with state government as that of higher education.

Your Advisory Council recommended that a new institution be established now, and we wholeheartedly concur, because we know of the many hours of research and study they devoted to this project before reaching their conclusion.