



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 708

January Session, 2007

Substitute House Bill No. 7272

House of Representatives, May 2, 2007

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. MERRILL of the 54th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING A STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN CONNECTICUT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2007*) (a) There is established a
2 Blue Ribbon Commission to develop and implement a strategic master
3 plan for higher education in Connecticut.

4 (1) The commission shall consist of the following voting members:
5 (A) Two members appointed by the speaker of the House of
6 Representatives, who shall have experience as former administrators
7 in independent institutions of higher education in this state; (B) two
8 members appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
9 whom shall be a former administrator of a regional community-
10 technical college and one of whom shall be a former administrator of
11 The University of Connecticut; (C) two members appointed by the
12 majority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be
13 a former administrator of a state university in the Connecticut State
14 University system and one of whom shall be a former administrator of

15 Charter Oak State College; (D) two members appointed by the majority
16 leader of the Senate, one of whom shall have experience in the field of
17 arts and culture and one of whom shall have experience in the field of
18 health care; (E) two members appointed by the minority leader of the
19 House of Representatives who shall have knowledge and expertise in
20 science and technology; (F) two members appointed by the minority
21 leader of the Senate who shall represent state-wide business
22 organizations; and (G) three members appointed by the Governor, one
23 of whom shall represent a nonprofit education foundation, one of
24 whom shall have experience in university research and its commercial
25 application and one of whom shall have experience in the field of
26 education from prekindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive. The
27 commission membership shall reflect the state's geographic, racial and
28 ethnic diversity.

29 (2) The following persons shall serve as ex-officio nonvoting
30 members on the commission: (A) The Commissioners of Higher
31 Education, Education, Economic and Community Development, and
32 the Labor Commissioner, or their designees; (B) the chairpersons of the
33 boards of trustees and the chief executive officers of each constituent
34 unit of the state system of higher education, or their designees; (C) the
35 chairperson of the board and president of the Connecticut Conference
36 of Independent Colleges, or their designees; (D) the director of the
37 Office of Workforce Competitiveness, or the director's designee; and
38 (E) the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
39 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
40 relating to higher education and employment advancement.

41 (3) The commission shall elect a chairperson at its first meeting. Any
42 vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority. The commission
43 members shall serve without compensation except for necessary
44 expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The commission
45 may seek the advice and participation of any person, organization or
46 state or federal agency it deems necessary to carry out the provisions
47 of this section. The commission may, within available appropriations,
48 retain consultants to assist in carrying out its duties. The commission

49 may receive funds from any public or private sources to carry out its
50 activities.

51 (b) The commission shall develop a strategic master plan that
52 promotes the following overall goals for higher education in this state:
53 (1) Ensure equal access and opportunity to post-secondary education
54 for all state residents, (2) promote student achievement, including
55 student performance, retention and graduation, (3) promote economic
56 competitiveness in the state, (4) improve access to higher education for
57 minorities and nontraditional students, including, but not limited to,
58 part-time students, incumbent workers, adult learners, former inmates
59 and immigrants, and (5) ensure the state's obligation to provide
60 adequate funding for higher education.

61 (c) The commission shall:

62 (1) Examine the impact of demographics and workforce trends on
63 higher education in the state;

64 (2) Address the problems identified in demographic forecasts,
65 including, but not limited to, the decrease in the number of young
66 people in the state earning a bachelor's degree, the decrease in the
67 number of young people entering the state's workforce and the
68 increasingly widening achievement gap among minority students;

69 (3) Develop and implement a strategic master plan for higher
70 education that identifies specific short-term and long-term goals for
71 the state and includes benchmarks for achieving those goals by 2010,
72 2015 and 2020;

73 (4) Examine funding policies for higher education including
74 coordination of appropriation, tuition and financial aid and seek ways
75 to maximize funding through federal and private grants; and

76 (5) Submit a biennium report prepared by the Department of Higher
77 Education to the Governor and the General Assembly on the progress
78 made toward achieving the benchmarks established in the strategic
79 plan.

80 (d) In developing the strategic master plan, the commission shall
81 review the plans pursuant to sections 10a-6 and 10a-11 of the general
82 statutes and the report titled "New England 2020: A Forecast of
83 Educational Attainment and its Implications for the Workforce of New
84 England States" prepared by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. In
85 addition, the commission may consider the following: (1) Establishing
86 incentives for institutional performance and productivity; (2)
87 increasing financial aid incentive programs, especially in workforce
88 shortage areas and for minority students; (3) implementing mandatory
89 college preparatory curricula in high schools and aligning such
90 curricula with curricula in institutions of higher education; (4) seeking
91 partnerships with the business community and public institutions of
92 higher education to serve the needs of workforce retraining that may
93 include bridge programs in which businesses work directly with
94 higher education institutions to move students into identified
95 workforce shortage areas; (5) establishing collaborative partnerships
96 between public high schools and institutions of higher education; (6)
97 implementing programs in high school to assist high school students
98 seeking a college track or alternative pathways for post-secondary
99 educations, such as vocational and technical opportunities; (7)
100 developing policies to promote and measure retention and graduation
101 rates of students; (8) addressing the educational needs of minority
102 students and nontraditional students, including, but not limited to,
103 part-time students, incumbent workers, adult learners, former inmates
104 and immigrants, in order to increase enrollment and retention in
105 institutions of higher education; and (9) addressing the affordability of
106 tuition at institutions of higher education and the issue of increased
107 student indebtedness.

108 (e) Not later than October 1, 2008, the commission shall submit the
109 strategic master plan, including specific goals and benchmarks for the
110 years ending 2010, 2015 and 2020, together with any recommendations
111 for appropriate legislation and funding to the Governor and the joint
112 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
113 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement,
114 education, commerce, labor and appropriations, in accordance with

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 08 \$	FY 09 \$
Higher Ed., Dept.	GF - Cost	Significant	Significant

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill establishes a blue ribbon commission to develop and implement a strategic master plan for Higher Education in Connecticut. Not later than October 1, 2008 the commission shall report specific goals and benchmarks for the years ending 2010, 2015, 2020. Not later than January 1, 2009 (and biennially thereafter) the Department of Higher Education (DHE) shall report to the committee of cognizance on the progress made toward the goals, and implementation of the strategic plan.

It is estimated that DHE would require a specialized planning consultant to assist in the development of the strategic plan. Additionally, DHE would require additional staff and resources to implement the provisions contained in the bill. The Appropriations Act, sHB 7077, as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee, contains \$100,000 in both FY 08 and FY 09 for the purposes of developing a strategic plan. It is uncertain if these funds would be sufficient to cover the costs of the bill.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue through 2021, at which point the commission is no longer required to report to the General Assembly.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 7272****AN ACT CONCERNING A STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN CONNECTICUT.****SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes a blue ribbon commission to develop and implement a strategic master plan for higher education in Connecticut by October 1, 2008. The strategic master plan must identify short-term and long-term state goals for higher education and include benchmarks for achieving those goals by 2010, 2015, and 2020. The bill also requires the commission to, until 2021, biennially submit a report prepared by the Department of Higher Education on the implementation of the plan and progress made in achieving the strategic plan's benchmarks to the governor and the General Assembly.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2007

BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION***Commission Membership***

The 34-member commission consists of 15 voting members and 19 ex-officio nonvoting members and must reflect the state's geographic, racial, and ethnic diversity. Table 1 shows the appointed voting members and their appointing authorities.

Table 1: Appointed Voting Members and Appointing Authorities

<i>No.</i>	<i>Appointee</i>	<i>Appointing Authority</i>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former administrators of independent higher education institutions 	House speaker
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former UConn administrator 	Senate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former community-technical college administrator 	president pro tempore
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former state university administrator Former Charter Oak State College administrator 	House majority leader
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative from the arts and culture field Representative from the health care field 	Senate majority leader
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons knowledgeable about science and technology 	House minority leader
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives of state-wide business organizations 	Senate minority leader
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative from a nonprofit education foundation Person experienced in university research and its commercial application Person experienced in prekindergarten to grade 12 education 	Governor

The ex-officio nonvoting members are the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee's chairpersons and ranking members and the following officials or their designees:

1. the higher education, education, economic and community development, and labor commissioners;
2. the chairpersons of the boards of trustees and the chief executive officers of each higher education constituent unit (UConn, the Connecticut State University system, the community-technical colleges, and the Board for State Academic Awards);
3. the chairperson of the board and president of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges; and
4. the Office Workforce Competitiveness director.

The bill requires the commission to elect a chairperson at its first meeting. The appointing authority must fill any vacancy. Members serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. To assist in

carrying out its duties, the commission may (1) seek the advice and participation of any necessary person, organization, state, or federal agency, (2) retain consultants within available appropriations; and (3) receive funds from any public or private sources. The commission terminates on January 1, 2021.

Commission Responsibilities

The commission must develop a strategic master plan for higher education that identifies short-term and long-term state goals and includes benchmarks for achieving those goals by 2010, 2015, and 2020.

The master plan must promote the following goals:

1. ensuring equal access and opportunity to postsecondary education for all state residents;
2. promoting student achievement, including performance, retention, and graduation;
3. promoting economic competitiveness in the state;
4. improving access to higher education for minorities and nontraditional students, including part-time students, incumbent workers, adult learners, former inmates and immigrants; and
5. ensuring the state's obligation to provide adequate funding for higher education.

The bill also requires the commission to:

1. examine the impact of demographics and workforce trends on higher education in the state;
2. address demographic problems including the decreasing number of students earning bachelor's degrees in the state, the decreasing number of young people entering the state's workforce, and the widening achievement gap among minority students;

3. examine higher education funding policies, including coordinating appropriations, tuition, and financial aid and maximizing federal and private funding; and
4. review the higher education board of governors' master plan for higher education and strategic plan for racial and ethnic diversity, and the Nellie Mae Foundation report titled, "New England 2020: A Forecast of Educational Attainment and its Implications for the Workforce of New England States."

In producing the master plan, the commission may consider:

1. establishing institutional performance and productivity incentives;
2. increasing financial aid incentive programs, particularly in workforce shortage areas and for minority students;
3. implementing mandatory college preparatory curricula in high schools and aligning it with postsecondary school curricula;
4. partnering public higher education institutions with the business community to move students into workforce shortage areas;
5. partnering public high schools with higher education institutions;
6. implementing high school programs to assist students seeking higher education, including vocational and technical opportunities;
7. developing policies to promote and measure retention and graduation rates;
8. addressing the educational needs and increasing retention and graduation rates of minority and nontraditional students; and
9. addressing tuition affordability and student indebtedness.

Reporting

By October 1, 2008, the bill requires the commission to submit its strategic master plan, including goals, benchmarks, and recommendations for appropriate legislation and funding, to the governor and the Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Education, Commerce, Labor, and Appropriations committees.

The bill also requires the commission to biennially submit, beginning by January 1, 2009 and until January 1, 2021, a report prepared by the Department of Higher Education on the implementation of the plan and progress made in achieving the strategic plan's benchmarks to the governor and the Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Education, Commerce, Labor, and Appropriations committees.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference
Yea 18 Nay 0 (03/13/2007)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 47 Nay 0 (04/17/2007)