
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5032 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION STATUTES.

SUMMARY:

This bill transfers several duties from the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education (OFAAHE), which the bill renames as the Office of Higher Education (OHE). It makes several changes to conform to PA 11-48, which reorganized Connecticut's higher education system, including establishing OFAAHE (see BACKGROUND).

The bill also authorizes OHE to perform several functions, while retaining the authority BOR has to perform them under existing law. Lastly, it makes numerous technical changes and repeals obsolete language (e.g., references to the higher education commissioner, Department of Higher Education, and Board of Governors for Higher Education) and references to repealed statutes.

*House Amendment "A" removes a provision that required BOR to develop a diversity strategic plan, leaving the responsibility with OHE, and makes additional technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

DUTIES TRANSFERRED FROM BOR TO OHE

The bill transfers several offices and duties from BOR to OHE, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Offices and Duties Transferred from BOR to OHE

Section	Office or Duty Transferred to OHE
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1	Requirement that OHE executive director, rather than BOR president, to (1) serve on the Connecticut Higher Education Trust Advisory Committee and (2) issue an annual report jointly with the treasurer
12, 13, 44, 46, 48, 49	Administration of the Higher Education State Matching Grant Fund
14	Office of Educational Opportunity
15	Office of Veterans' Affairs for Higher Education
16	Requirement to establish a Connecticut award for excellence in science and technology
19	Provision of tutors for eligible students
20	Administration of the Endowed Chair Investment Fund
40	Provision of a comprehensive, coordinated, statewide system of college and university community service programs
41	Provision of grants to public and nonprofit service entities seeking to participate in the federal National and Community Service Trust Program

CONFORMING CHANGES

§§ 2, 6, & 38—OHE Programs

The bill makes conforming changes to reflect OHE's administration of the Alternate Route to Certification program, the Connecticut Independent College Student grant program, Capitol Scholarship program, and high technology graduate scholarship program. For the latter two, the bill extends to OHE a requirement to report to the Appropriations Committee on the amount of the appropriation carried over from the preceding fiscal year.

§§ 5-10, 52-55, 501, 502, 504, & 505—Accreditation by State Board of Education (SBE)

The bill makes several conforming changes to reflect SBE's responsibility to accredit independent higher education institutions.

PA 11-48 divided institutional accreditation responsibilities by making BOR responsible for accrediting public institutions and SBE responsible for accrediting independent institutions. Before the passage of PA 11-48, the Board of Governors for Higher Education accredited all higher education institutions.

§§ 22-36—Private Occupational Schools

The bill requires OHE, rather than SBE, to adopt regulations concerning licensure of private occupational schools. The change conforms to PA 11-48, which made OHE responsible for overseeing private occupational schools. The bill also corrects erroneous references to the higher education commissioner, replacing them with references to OHE's executive director. PA 11-48 eliminated the commissioner's position.

OTHER CHANGES

The bill allows OHE to perform several functions that BOR performs and retains BOR's authority to perform them as it does under existing law, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: BOR Functions That OHE May Also Perform

Section	Description
17	Receive federal and private funds for postsecondary educational purposes
18	Designation as State Postsecondary Education Commission
21	Contract with higher education institutions to promote (1) joint programs, services, and facility use; (2) development of cooperative academic programs; and (3) improved planning and evaluation processes related to institutional or programmatic consolidations, retrenchment, or phase-out
37	Enter into student exchange agreements
39, 503	Serve as the state agency for any federal program under any act of Congress or administrative ruling
51	Requirement to biennially report to the legislature on higher education cost and financial aid trends (the bill requires both

	BOR and OHE to submit the report)
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BACKGROUND

PA 11-48

This act created OFAAHE and placed it within BOR for administrative purposes only. The office is led by an executive director appointed by the governor and subject to legislative confirmation. The act required the new office to administer several programs previously administered by the Department of Higher Education and the Board of Governors for Higher Education, including:

1. oversight of private occupational schools;
2. granting authority to independent institutions to confer academic degrees and licensing and accrediting programs and institutions of higher learning (subject to final approval by SBE);
3. approving entities that were granted authority to confer degrees before July 1, 1935, but that did not exercise it until after that date;
4. the alternate route to teaching certification program;
5. scholarship and financial aid programs for Connecticut students; and
6. the student community service fellowship program.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/20/2012)