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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sSB 847**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMMISSION FOR TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENT.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

This bill renames the Commission for Educational Technology the Commission for Technology Advancement, changes its membership, and revises the commission's charge and goals by requiring it to be the state's principal technology advancement entity, rather than educational technology policy advisor.

The bill also repeals laws requiring the commission to work with (1) the administrative services department to develop technology standards for school construction projects and the educational technology grant program and (2) the State Department of Education (SDE) to develop, and biennially update, a state-wide standard and plan for teacher and administrator competency in the use of instructional technology.

Lastly, the bill makes conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2013

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

The bill maintains the commission's size (17 members), but changes its membership by replacing five current members with five new members. The bill removes from the current commission:

1. the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority chairperson,
2. a representative of the Connecticut Educators Computer Association,
3. a representative of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents,

4. a secondary school teacher designated by the Connecticut Education Association, and
5. an elementary school teacher designated by the Connecticut Federation of Educational and Professional Employees.

The bill adds to the commission:

1. the Office of Policy and Management secretary,
2. the Department of Economic and Community Development commissioner,
3. the Consumer Counsel,
4. a representative from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, and
5. a representative from the Connecticut Council of Small Towns.

The bill changes the qualifications of four members. Under current law, four members must represent businesses and have expertise in information technology. Under the bill, they must either represent businesses or have information technology expertise. The bill increases, from one to two, the number of these representatives appointed by the governor and eliminates the lieutenant governor's appointee.

The bill allows designees of all members to serve in their place. It also requires the governor to appoint the chairperson, rather than the commission electing the chairperson, as under current law.

The newly constituted commission must meet at least once each quarter.

## **DUTIES**

The bill revises the commission's charge and goals by requiring it to develop, oversee, and direct state-wide technology advancement goals. In doing so, it must increase the availability and use of technology that

promotes efficiency; digital literacy; and collaboration between state and local governments, “institutions of education”, and other related entities. The bill does not define “institutions of education.” The bill also adds municipal facilities to the list of entities to be connected to the state’s high speed network.

The bill requires the commission to establish a process for (1) rate setting and (2) determining which colleges, universities, libraries, public schools, regional educational services centers, and municipal facilities will be connected to the network, as the commission is no longer required to connect every eligible entity. Network service rates may be set no higher than necessary to cover network maintenance and operating costs.

The commission must develop a plan for improving digital literacy and awareness, as well as improving research and access, not just education, through technology.

The bill also:

1. requires, starting in 2015, the commission to report biennially, rather than annually, to the legislature;
2. adds the Commerce and Higher Education committees as recipients of the report (under current law the commission reports to the Appropriations and Education committees);
3. eliminates a requirement that the report be shared with the State Board of Education (SBE) and Board of Regents for Higher Education;
4. eliminates a requirement for the report to recommend adjustments to the funding formula for SDE’s educational technology grant program; and
5. removes references to educational technology and replaces them with references to technology advancement.

#### **DUTIES ELIMINATED**

The bill eliminates the commission’s duty to:

1. ensure, in cooperation with the SBE, computing competency for all sixth graders;
2. measure the public availability and use of Internet access sites and recommend strategies for reducing usage and accessibility disparities across the states;
3. coordinate the activities of state agencies, educational institutions, and other parties involved in creating and managing a network that allows video, voice, and data transmission and offers connectivity in every library, school, regional educational service center, and institution of higher education;
4. include in its long-range plan, a strategy that ensures teachers and faculty know how to use technology to improve education; and
5. establish policies to involve individuals with expertise in the commission's work.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 11 Nay 8 (04/01/2013)