
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 878

AN ACT MAKING CLARIFYING CHANGES TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION STATUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REORGANIZATION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM.

SUMMARY:

This bill makes several unrelated changes to the higher education statutes, including (1) transferring certain duties from the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to the Office of Higher Education (OHE), (2) adding UConn's provost to the Higher Education Coordinating Council and allowing UConn to enter into student exchange agreements, (3) extending certain deadlines for the Planning Commission for Higher Education, and (4) repealing obsolete statutory language. It also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2013

§§ 1-4, 9, 16 — DUTIES TRANSFERRED TO OHE

The bill requires that OHE, rather than BOR, administer the academic scholarship graduate student loan program and fund. By law, the program supports graduate students in teacher preparation programs. The bill eliminates provisions that provide, for reasons of hardship, death, or disability, loan deferments and forgiveness to undergraduates who receive similar loans.

The bill transfers to OHE a requirement to, within available appropriations, (1) establish an accelerated cross endorsement process for subject shortage areas and (2) establish a program for formerly certified teachers to regain certification. Under current law, the State Department of Education performs these functions in cooperation with BOR.

§§ 5 & 7 — UCONN

The bill adds UConn's chief academic officer (i.e., provost) to the

Higher Education Coordinating Council. By law, the council must, for public higher education institutions, (1) identify, examine, and implement savings in administrative functions and (2) develop accountability measures. The bill also allows UConn to enter into student exchange agreements with foreign countries or other states. BOR and OHE have this authority under existing law.

§ 6 — UNIQUE IDENTIFIER TRACKING

Under current law, BOR must require public and independent higher education institutions receiving state funding to track unique identifiers or state-assigned student identifiers for all in-state students enrolled at the institution until the student graduates or is no longer enrolled. The bill eliminates BOR's responsibility and instead directly requires institutions to do this. By law, such identifiers are assigned to all students tracked by the Early Childhood Information System.

§ 15 — PLANNING COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

By law, the Planning Commission for Higher Education must develop and ensure the implementation of a strategic master plan for higher education. The bill extends, by two years, several of the commission's reporting dates. It requires the commission to submit (1) a preliminary report on the development of the strategic master plan by January 1, 2014 and (2) the plan by October 1, 2014 (rather than by January 1, 2012 and October 1, 2012, respectively). It also requires annual reports to the governor and legislature on the plan's implementation and progress toward achieving the goals (1) beginning January 1, 2016, to various legislative committees and (2) beginning October 1, 2016, to the governor (rather than by January 1, 2014 and October 1, 2014, respectively).

§§ 8 & 16 — REPEALED PROVISIONS

The bill eliminates obsolete references to the auxiliary services funds of the constituent units of higher education. These funds were eliminated in 1991; the constituent units instead have single operating funds.

The bill repeals the high technology doctoral fellowship program,

advisory committee on federal matters, and Student Financial Aid Information Council, all of which are defunct. It also repeals obsolete provisions concerning (1) paraprofessional certification programs and (2) the issuance of postsecondary education certificates by BOR. Lastly, it eliminates an obsolete requirement concerning the disclosure to the BOR president of certain gifts received from foreign entities. However, it does not repeal language that specifies (1) what the disclosure must contain and (2) that the disclosure is a public record.

BACKGROUND

Related Bills

sSB 844, reported favorably by the Higher Education Committee, eliminates the academic scholarship graduate loan program and fund.

sHB 6363, reported favorably by the Government Administration and Elections Committee, also eliminates the Student Financial Aid Advisory Council.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/26/2013)