



Substitute House Bill No. 7007

Public Act No. 15-75

***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.***

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

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2015*) (a) The policies of higher education in the state shall be consistent with the following goals adopted from the recommendations of the Planning Commission for Higher Education in the strategic master plan for higher education developed pursuant to section 10a-11b of the general statutes, as amended by this act:

(1) Increase the education levels of the adult population of the state, on or before January 1, 2025, to a target of not less than forty per cent of adults having earned a bachelor degree and not less than thirty per cent of adults having earned an associate degree or sub-baccalaureate certificate for purposes of ensuring the state has a workforce with the skills necessary for achieving and sustaining a competitive economy by measures including, but not limited to (A) reducing socioeconomic disparities, (B) reducing the achievement gap between whites and minorities, as defined in section 10-155l of the general statutes, (C) improving the lives of residents living in the most urbanized areas of the cities of the state, and (D) ensuring that the quality of postsecondary education is improved;

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(2) Develop a globally competitive workforce and economy in the state by cultivating an environment that attracts and retains a highly educated, diverse population by (A) aligning postsecondary degree attainment with the workforce needs of employers in the state, (B) contributing to the expansion and diversification of the state's economy through research and innovation, (C) establishing partnerships between institutions of higher education and business, civic and cultural leaders in the state, and (D) increasing the number of students engaged in community service, internships and other workplace-based learning experiences; and

(3) Ensure that higher education is affordable for the residents of the state by (A) narrowing the gap between the cost of attendance at an institution of higher education and family income, (B) reducing, on or before January 1, 2025, the average student loan to the national average, and (C) increasing, on or before January 1, 2025, by five per cent the number of recent high school graduates in the state who enroll in institutions of higher education in the state.

(b) For purposes of this section, "sub-baccalaureate certificate" means a postsecondary award earned on a for-credit basis and conferred upon successful completion of a formal postsecondary program below the baccalaureate level.

Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 10a-1b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

(a) The Board of Regents for Higher Education shall appoint a president who shall serve at the pleasure of the board. The president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education shall (1) have the authority to implement the policies, directives and rules of the board and any additional responsibilities as the board may prescribe, (2) implement the goals identified in section 1 of this act and recommendations made

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pursuant to section 10a-11b, as amended by this act, (3) build interdependent support among the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College, (4) balance central authority with institutional differentiation, autonomy and creativity, and (5) facilitate cooperation and synergy among the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College. Said president may designate an alternate to serve as a member of any commission, foundation or committee upon which the general statutes require said president to serve. Such designee may vote on behalf of said president. There shall be an executive staff responsible for the operation of the Board of Regents for Higher Education. The executive staff shall be under the direction of the president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, who shall be the chief executive officer of the Board of Regents for Higher Education.

Sec. 3. Section 10a-6 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

(a) The Board of Regents for Higher Education shall: (1) Establish [state-wide policy and guidelines for Connecticut's system of public higher education] policies and guidelines for the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College; (2) develop a master plan for higher education and postsecondary education [.] at the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College consistent with the goals [in subsection (b) of this section] identified in section 1 of this act; (3) establish [state-wide] tuition and student fee policies for the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College; (4) monitor and evaluate [institutional] the effectiveness and viability of the state universities, the regional

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community-technical colleges and Charter Oak State College in accordance with criteria established by the board; (5) merge or close institutions within the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College in accordance with criteria established by the board, provided (A) such recommended merger or closing shall require a two-thirds vote of the board, and (B) notice of such recommended merger or closing shall be sent to the committee having cognizance over matters relating to education and to the General Assembly; (6) review and approve mission statements for the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College and role and scope statements for the individual institutions and campuses of such constituent units; (7) review and approve any recommendations for the establishment of new academic programs submitted to the board by the state [colleges] universities within the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical colleges and Charter Oak State College, and, in consultation with the affected constituent units, provide for the initiation, consolidation or termination of academic programs; [The Board of Regents for Higher Education shall notify the board of trustees affected by the proposed termination of an academic program. Within ninety days of receipt of such notice, said trustees shall accept or reject the termination proposal and shall notify the Board of Regents for Higher Education of its action. If the termination proposal is rejected by the trustees, the Board of Regents for Higher Education may override the rejection by a two-thirds vote;] (8) develop criteria to ensure acceptable quality in (A) programs [and institutions] at the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College, and (B) institutions within the Connecticut State University System and the regional community-technical college system and enforce standards through licensing and accreditation; (9) prepare and present to the Governor and General Assembly, in accordance with section 10a-8,

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consolidated operating and capital expenditure budgets for [public higher education] the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College developed in accordance with the provisions of said section 10a-8; (10) review and make recommendations on plans received from the [constituent unit boards of trustees for the continuing development and maximum utilization of the state's public higher education resources] Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College to implement the goals identified in section 1 of this act; (11) appoint advisory committees [to assist in defining and suggesting solutions for the problems and needs of higher education; (12) establish an advisory council for higher education] with representatives from public and [private] independent institutions of higher education to study methods and proposals for coordinating efforts of [all such institutions in providing a stimulating and enriched educational environment for the citizens of the state, including measures to improve educational opportunities] the public institutions of higher education under its jurisdiction with The University of Connecticut and the independent institutions of higher education to implement the goals identified in section 1 of this act; (12) evaluate (A) means of implementing the goals identified in section 1 of this act, and (B) any recommendations made by the Planning Commission for Higher Education in implementing the strategic master plan pursuant to section 10a-11b, as amended by this act, through alternative and nontraditional approaches such as external degrees and credit by examination; (13) coordinate programs and services [throughout public higher education and between public and independent institutions, including procedures to evaluate the impact on independent institutions of higher education of proposals affecting public institutions of higher education; (14)] among the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College; (14) assess opportunities for collaboration with The University of Connecticut and

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the independent institutions of higher education to implement the goals identified in section 1 of this act; (15) make or enter into contracts, leases or other agreements in connection with its responsibilities under this part, provided all acquisitions of real estate by lease or otherwise shall be subject to the provisions of section 4b-23; [(15)] (16) be responsible for the care and maintenance of permanent records of institutions of higher education dissolved after September 1, 1969; [(16)] (17) prepare and present to the Governor and General Assembly legislative proposals affecting [public higher education, including proposals which utilize programs and facilities of independent institutions of higher education; (17)] the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College; (18) develop and maintain a central higher education information system and establish definitions and data requirements for the [state system of higher education; (18)] Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College; (19) report all new programs and program changes at the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College to the Office of Higher Education; and [(19)] (20) undertake such studies and other activities as will best serve the higher educational interests of the [state] Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College.

(b) Within the limits of authorized expenditures, the policies of the state system of higher education shall be consistent with (1) the following goals: [(1)] (A) To ensure that no qualified person be denied the opportunity for higher education on the basis of age, sex, gender identity or expression, ethnic background or social, physical or economic condition, [(2)] (B) to protect academic freedom, [(3)] (C) to provide opportunities for education and training related to the economic, cultural and educational development of the state, [(4)] (D)

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to assure the fullest possible use of available resources in public and private institutions of higher education, [(5)] (E) to maintain standards of quality ensuring a position of national leadership for state institutions of higher education, [(6)] (F) to apply the resources of higher education to the problems of society, and [(7)] (G) to foster flexibility in the policies and institutions of higher education to enable the system to respond to changes in the economy, society, technology and student interests; and (2) the goals for higher education in the state identified in section 1 of this act. Said board shall review recent studies of the need for higher education services, with special attention to those completed pursuant to legislative action, and to meet such needs shall initiate additional programs or services through one or more of the constituent units.

(c) Repealed by P.A. 83-533, S. 53, 54.

(d) The board of regents shall request and receive, or be provided electronic access to, data, reports and other information from the [constituent units of the state system of higher education that is] public institutions of higher education under its jurisdiction that are necessary for the board to carry out its responsibilities pursuant to this section.

Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 10a-104 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

(a) The Board of Trustees of The University of Connecticut shall: (1) Make rules for the government of the university and shall determine the general policies of the university, including those concerning the admission of students and the establishment of schools, colleges, divisions and departments, which policies shall be consistent with the goals identified in section 1 of this act, and shall direct the expenditure of the university's funds within the amounts available; (2) develop the

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mission statement for The University of Connecticut, and all campuses thereof, [which] that shall be consistent with such goals and include, but not be limited to, the following elements: (A) The educational needs of and constituencies served by said university and campuses; (B) the degrees offered by said university; and (C) the role and scope of each institution and campus within the university system, which shall include each institution's and campus' particular strengths and specialties; (3) establish policies for the university system and for the individual institutions and campuses under its jurisdiction; (4) review and approve recommendations for the establishment of new academic programs; (5) report all new programs and program changes to the Office of Higher Education, (6) make recommendations, when appropriate, regarding institutional or campus mergers or closures; (7) coordinate the programs and services of the institutions and campuses under its jurisdiction; (8) be authorized to enter into agreements, consistent with the provisions of section 5-141d, to save harmless and indemnify sponsors of research grants to The University of Connecticut, provided such an agreement is required to receive the grant and limits liability to damages or injury resulting from acts or omissions related to such research by employees of the university; (9) promote fund-raising to assist the university and report to the executive director of the Office of Higher Education and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education by January 1, 1994, and biennially thereafter, on such fund-raising; (10) charge the direct costs for a building project under its jurisdiction to the bond fund account for such project, provided (A) such costs are charged in accordance with a procedure approved by the Treasurer and (B) nothing in this subdivision shall permit the charging of working capital costs, as defined in the applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as from time to time amended, or costs originally paid from sources other than the bond fund account; (11) exercise the

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powers delegated to it pursuant to section 10a-109d; and (12) establish by October 1, 1997, policies governing the acceptance of gifts made by a foundation established pursuant to sections 4-37e and 4-37f to the university or its employees for reimbursement of expenditures or payment of expenditures on behalf of the university or its employees.

Sec. 5. Section 10a-6b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

[(a) The accountability measures developed by the Higher Education Coordinating Council pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10a-6a shall be used by the Board of Regents for Higher Education and each constituent unit of the state system of higher education in assessing each public institution of higher education's progress toward meeting the following goals to: (1) Enhance student learning and promote academic excellence; (2) join with elementary and secondary schools to improve teaching and learning at all levels; (3) ensure access to and affordability of higher education; (4) promote the economic development of the state to help business and industry sustain strong economic growth; (5) respond to the needs and problems of society; and (6) ensure the efficient use of resources. The council shall develop an implementation plan for use of the accountability measures.]

[(b)] (a) In developing the accountability measures pursuant to subsection [(a) of this section] (b) of section 10a-6a, the [council] Higher Education Coordinating Council shall consider [: (1) Graduation rates, (2) student retention rates, (3) completions, (4) tuition and fees, (5) allocation of resources across expenditure functions, as defined by the National Association of College and University Business Officers, (6) revenues and expenditures broken out by programs, (7) student financial need and available aid, (8) transfer patterns of students transferring in and out of the constituent units, (9) trends in enrollment and the percentage of incoming students who are state residents, (10) strategic plans pursuant to section 10a-11, (11) data

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on graduates, including age, by academic and noncredit vocational course and program, (12) faculty productivity, (13)] (1) the goals adopted by the Planning Commission for Higher Education and identified in section 1 of this act, and [(14)] (2) any other factor that it deems relevant. All measures shall be made available for inspection and separated out by constituent unit, institution of higher education, campus and program.

(b) The Board of Regents for Higher Education and each constituent unit of the state system of higher education shall use such accountability measures in assessing the progress of each public institution of higher education toward meeting such goals.

(c) The council shall work with the Labor Department to (1) produce periodic reports, capable of being sorted by student age, on the employment status, job retention and earnings of students enrolled in academic and noncredit vocational courses and programs, both prior to enrollment and after completion of such courses and programs, who leave the constituent units upon graduation or otherwise, and (2) develop an annual affordability index for public higher education that is based on state-wide median family income.

(d) The council shall submit the accountability measures to the Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Board of Trustees of The University of Connecticut for [the board's] review and approval. Once the measures are approved, each constituent unit, [shall provide] under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, shall provide to said board and The University of Connecticut shall provide to the Board of Trustees of The University of Connecticut the data [to the board] that is necessary for purposes of applying the measures.

(e) Each public institution of higher education, [of the state system of higher education] under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents for

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Higher Education, shall submit an accountability report to the president of [the Board of Regents for Higher Education] said board annually, by [November] December first. The president shall compile the reports and shall submit, in accordance with section 11-4a, a consolidated accountability report for the state system of higher education to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education annually, by [December] February first. The report shall contain accountability measures for each constituent unit and public institution of higher education pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of this section. The report shall include updated baseline and peer comparison data, performance improvement targets for each measure, and other information as determined by the president.

(f) The University of Connecticut shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, an accountability report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education annually, by February first. The report shall contain accountability measures for the university pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of this section. The report shall include updated baseline and peer comparison data, performance improvement targets for each measure, and other information as determined by the president of The University of Connecticut.

Sec. 6. Section 10a-11b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

(a) There is established a Planning Commission for Higher Education to develop and ensure the implementation of a strategic master plan for higher education in Connecticut.

(1) The commission shall consist of the following voting members:
(A) Two members appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall have experience as former administrators

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or faculty members in independent institutions of higher education in this state; (B) two members appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall be a former administrator or faculty member of a regional community-technical college and one of whom shall be a former administrator or faculty member of The University of Connecticut; (C) two members appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be a former administrator or faculty member of a state university in the Connecticut State University System and one of whom shall be a former administrator or faculty member of Charter Oak State College; (D) two members appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom shall have experience in the field of arts and culture and one of whom shall have experience in the field of health care; (E) two members appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives who shall have knowledge and expertise in science and technology; (F) two members appointed by the minority leader of the Senate who shall represent state-wide business organizations; and (G) five members appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall represent a nonprofit education foundation, one of whom shall have experience in university research and its commercial application and one of whom shall have experience in the field of education from prekindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive. The commission membership shall reflect the state's geographic, racial and ethnic diversity.

(2) The following persons shall serve as ex-officio nonvoting members on the commission: (A) The president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, the Commissioner of Education, the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development and the Labor Commissioner, or their designees; (B) the chairpersons of the boards of trustees and the chief executive officers of each constituent unit of the state system of higher education, or their designees; (C) the chairperson of the board and president of the Connecticut Conference

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of Independent Colleges, or their designees; (D) the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and employment advancement; and (E) the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee.

(3) The commission shall elect a chairperson at its first meeting. Any vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority. The term of each appointed member of the commission shall be three years from the date of appointment. The commission members shall serve without compensation except for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The commission may seek the advice and participation of any person, organization or state or federal agency it deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. The commission may, within available appropriations, retain consultants to assist in carrying out its duties. The commission may receive funds from any public or private sources to carry out its activities.

(b) In accordance with subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 10a-6, as amended by this act, the commission shall develop and ensure the implementation of a strategic master plan that:

(1) Examines the impact of demographic, workforce and education trends on higher education in the state;

(2) (A) Establishes numerical goals for 2015 and 2020 to increase the number of people earning a bachelor's degree, associate degree or certificate, increases the number of people successfully completing coursework at the community college level and the number of people entering the state's workforce and eliminates the postsecondary achievement gap between minority students and the general student population, and (B) includes specific strategies for meeting such goals, as well as strategies for meeting the goals pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 10a-6, as amended by this act;

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(3) Examines and recommends changes to funding policies, practices and accountability in order to (A) align policies and practices with the goals set forth in subsection (b) of section 10a-6, as amended by this act, including an evaluation of the use of strategic and performance-based incentive funding; (B) determine how the constituent units shall annually report to the General Assembly and the public in a transparent and thorough manner regarding each constituent unit's expenditures, staffing and state support, including the state appropriation, personnel expenses, personnel fringe benefits, capital improvement bonds and financial aid to students; and (C) improve coordination of appropriation, tuition and financial aid and seek ways to maximize funding through federal and private grants; and

(4) Recommends ways in which each constituent unit of the state system of higher education and independent institution of higher education in the state can, in a manner consistent with such institution's mission, expand such institution's role in advancing the state's economic growth.

(c) In developing the strategic master plan, the commission shall review the plans pursuant to sections 10a-6, as amended by this act, and 10a-11. In addition, the commission may consider the following: (1) Establishing incentives for institutional performance and productivity; (2) increasing financial aid incentive programs, especially in workforce shortage areas and for minority students; (3) implementing mandatory college preparatory curricula in high schools and aligning such curricula with curricula in institutions of higher education; (4) seeking partnerships with the business community and public institutions of higher education to serve the needs of workforce retraining that may include bridge programs in which businesses work directly with higher education institutions to move students into identified workforce shortage areas; (5) establishing collaborative

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partnerships between public high schools and institutions of higher education; (6) implementing programs in high school to assist high school students seeking a college track or alternative pathways for post-secondary education, such as vocational and technical opportunities; (7) developing policies to promote and measure retention and graduation rates of students, including graduation rates for students who have transferred among two or more constituent units or public institutions of higher education; (8) addressing the educational needs of minority students and nontraditional students, including, but not limited to, part-time students, incumbent workers, adult learners, former inmates and immigrants, in order to increase enrollment and retention in institutions of higher education; and (9) addressing the affordability of tuition at institutions of higher education and the issue of increased student indebtedness.

(d) Not later than June 1, 2014, the commission shall submit a preliminary report on the development of the strategic master plan and, not later than September 1, 2014, the commission shall submit the strategic master plan, including specific goals and benchmarks for the years ending 2020 and 2025, together with any recommendations for appropriate legislation and funding to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and employment advancement, education, commerce, labor and appropriations, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.

(e) Not later than January 1, 2016, and annually thereafter, the commission shall submit a report to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and employment advancement, education, commerce, labor and appropriations, in accordance with section 11-4a, on the implementation of the plan and progress made toward achieving the goals specified in the plan. The commission may

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periodically suggest changes to the goals as necessary.

(f) Not later than January 1, 2016, for purposes of implementing the strategic master plan pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the commission, in collaboration with the Office of Policy and Management, shall establish working groups and consult with any existing working groups, commissions or task forces that may investigate and offer guidance on specific objectives identified by the commission or the office, including, but not limited to, outcomes-based financing and workforce development, the examination of which by the commission are essential to achieving the goals specified in the plan.

Approved June 24, 2015