



***Substitute House Bill No. 6117***

***Special Act No. 15-18***

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF DIGITAL OPEN-SOURCE  
TEXTBOOKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION.***

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

Section 1. (*Effective July 1, 2015*) (a) For purposes of this section and section 2 of this act:

(1) "Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium" means the division of Charter Oak State College that provides services and support to help educators develop and deliver effective technology-enhanced learning opportunities to students and adults in the workforce;

(2) "Open educational resources" includes the full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software and other similar teaching, learning and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits the free use and repurposing of such resources;

(3) "Open license" means a world-wide, royalty-free, nonexclusive, perpetual and irrevocable copyright license granting the public permission to access, reproduce, publicly perform, publicly display, adapt, distribute and otherwise use, for any purpose, the work and adaptations of such work when credit or acknowledgment is given to any designated author of such work; and

**Substitute House Bill No. 6117**

(4) "Open-source textbook" means a college-level textbook licensed under an open license and made available on an Internet web site to be used by students, faculty and members of the public on an unlimited basis at minimal or no cost.

(b) The Board of Regents for Higher Education and The University of Connecticut shall each establish an open-source textbook pilot program to (1) assess the use of high-quality digital open-source textbooks, and (2) promote the use of and access to open-source textbooks within their respective constituent units. The programming for such pilot programs, shall include, but not be limited to, seminars and workshops on awareness and implementation of open-source textbooks and open educational resources for faculty and staff of the institutions of higher education under the jurisdiction of such constituent units and workshops on supportive open educational resources policy and administration for academic leaders of such institutions. The Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium may share such programming with its private members at a cost to be determined by said consortium.

(c) Not later than July 1, 2016, the president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education and the president of The University of Connecticut shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education, regarding such pilot programs. Such report shall include (1) an analysis of the potential cost savings to students for courses using an open-source textbook in lieu of a traditional college-level textbook, and (2) the identification of any barriers to the effective use of open-source textbooks by students and faculty.

Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to study best practices with regard to open educational resources. The task force shall consider the development of a program to incentivize

***Substitute House Bill No. 6117***

the creation or adaptation of open educational resources that will significantly reduce the cost to students of course materials, including, but not limited to, offering financial or academic or professional credit to faculty to create open educational resources.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) One faculty member and one administrator of The University of Connecticut, who shall be appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;

(2) One faculty member and one administrator of the regional community-technical college system, who shall be appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;

(3) One administrator of Charter Oak State College and one student of a public institution of higher education representing a formally recognized student organization, who shall be appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives;

(4) One faculty member of Charter Oak State College and one student of an independent institution of higher education in the state who represents a formally recognized student organization, who shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(5) One faculty member and one administrator of the Connecticut State University System, who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

(6) One faculty member and one administrator of an independent institution of higher education, who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

(7) The president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, or the president's designee;

**Substitute House Bill No. 6117**

(8) The president of The University of Connecticut, or the president's designee;

(9) The executive director of the Office of Higher Education, or the executive director's designee;

(10) The chief academic officer of The University of Connecticut, or the chief academic officer's designee; and

(11) The chief academic officer of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, or the chief academic officer's designee.

(c) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The executive director of the Office of Higher Education, or the executive director's designee, shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section. The members of the task force shall select the chairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. One such chairperson shall be from an institution of higher education under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, and the other such chairperson shall be from The University of Connecticut.

(e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(f) Not later than October 1, 2016, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it

***Substitute House Bill No. 6117***

submits such report or October 1, 2016, whichever is earlier.

Approved July 2, 2015