



House Bill No. 5070

Public Act No. 16-120

**AN ACT CONCERNING PARTICIPATION IN THE STANDARD
AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCIY AGREEMENT REGARDING
DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS.**

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

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2016*) (a) Not later than January 1, 2017, the Office of Higher Education shall enter into a multistate or regional reciprocity agreement for purposes of enabling the state and Connecticut institutions of higher education to participate in a nationwide state authorization reciprocity agreement (1) establishing uniform standards for distance learning programs across states, and (2) eliminating the need for a state participating in the state authorization reciprocity agreement to assess the quality of a distance learning program offered by an out-of-state institution of higher education through the participating state's authorization, licensing and accreditation process. Notwithstanding the provisions of part III of chapter 185 of the general statutes and upon the Office of Higher Education entering into the multistate or regional reciprocity agreement, an out-of-state institution of higher education that participates in the state authorization reciprocity agreement may operate a distance learning program in the state in accordance with the uniform standards.

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(b) Any Connecticut institution of higher education that seeks to participate in the nation-wide state authorization reciprocity agreement under subsection (a) of this section shall submit an application with the Office of Higher Education on a form prescribed by the office. The office shall approve or reject the institution's application in accordance with the terms of such agreement. Authorization by the office to participate in such agreement shall be valid for a period of one year and may be renewed by the office for additional one-year periods. The office shall establish a schedule of application and renewal fees for all Connecticut institutions of higher education that participate in such agreement. The fee schedule shall be graduated based on the number of full-time equivalent students at each Connecticut institution of higher education.

(c) Nothing in subsection (a) of this section shall be construed to affect the authority of the Attorney General to enforce the provisions of chapter 735a of the general statutes or Title X of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, P.L. 111-203, as amended from time to time.

Approved June 6, 2016