



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 317

January Session, 2019

Senate Bill No. 749

Senate, April 2, 2019

The Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement reported through SEN. HASKELL of the 26th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT REQUIRING LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL FOR THE MERGER OR CLOSING OF INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10a-6 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
3 *1, 2019*):

4 (a) The Board of Regents for Higher Education shall: (1) Establish
5 policies and guidelines for the Connecticut State University System,
6 the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak
7 State College; (2) develop a master plan for higher education and
8 postsecondary education at the Connecticut State University System,
9 the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak
10 State College consistent with the goals identified in section 10a-11c; (3)
11 establish tuition and student fee policies for the Connecticut State
12 University System, the regional community-technical college system

13 and Charter Oak State College; (4) monitor and evaluate the
14 effectiveness and viability of the state universities, the regional
15 community-technical colleges and Charter Oak State College in
16 accordance with criteria established by the board; (5) merge or close
17 institutions within the Connecticut State University System, the
18 regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State
19 College in accordance with criteria established by the board, provided
20 (A) such recommended merger or closing shall require a two-thirds
21 vote of the board, [and] (B) notice of such recommended merger or
22 closing shall be sent to the joint standing committee of the General
23 Assembly having cognizance [over] of matters relating to higher
24 education, [and to the General Assembly] and (C) such recommended
25 merger or closing shall be accepted by a majority vote of both houses
26 of the General Assembly or rejected by a majority vote of either house
27 of the General Assembly not later than one year after receiving notice
28 by the board pursuant to this subsection or the adjournment of the
29 next regular session of the General Assembly, whichever is later,
30 provided, if the General Assembly fails to act, such recommended
31 merger or closing shall be deemed accepted; (6) review and approve
32 mission statements for the Connecticut State University System, the
33 regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State
34 College and role and scope statements for the individual institutions
35 and campuses of such constituent units; (7) review and approve any
36 recommendations for the establishment of new academic programs
37 submitted to the board by the state universities within the Connecticut
38 State University System, the regional community-technical colleges
39 and Charter Oak State College, and, in consultation with the affected
40 constituent units, provide for the initiation, consolidation or
41 termination of academic programs; (8) develop criteria to ensure
42 acceptable quality in (A) programs at the Connecticut State University
43 System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter
44 Oak State College, and (B) institutions within the Connecticut State
45 University System and the regional community-technical college
46 system and enforce standards through licensing and accreditation; (9)
47 prepare and present to the Governor and General Assembly, in

48 accordance with section 10a-8, consolidated operating and capital
49 expenditure budgets for the Connecticut State University System, the
50 regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State
51 College developed in accordance with the provisions of said section
52 10a-8; (10) review and make recommendations on plans received from
53 the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-
54 technical college system and Charter Oak State College to implement
55 the goals identified in section 10a-11c; (11) appoint advisory
56 committees with representatives from public and independent
57 institutions of higher education to study methods and proposals for
58 coordinating efforts of the public institutions of higher education
59 under its jurisdiction with The University of Connecticut and the
60 independent institutions of higher education to implement the goals
61 identified in section 10a-11c; (12) evaluate (A) means of implementing
62 the goals identified in section 10a-11c, and (B) any recommendations
63 made by the Planning Commission for Higher Education in
64 implementing the strategic master plan pursuant to section 10a-11b
65 through alternative and nontraditional approaches such as external
66 degrees and credit by examination; (13) coordinate programs and
67 services among the Connecticut State University System, the regional
68 community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College;
69 (14) assess opportunities for collaboration with The University of
70 Connecticut and the independent institutions of higher education to
71 implement the goals identified in section 10a-11c; (15) make or enter
72 into contracts, leases or other agreements in connection with its
73 responsibilities under this part, provided all acquisitions of real estate
74 by lease or otherwise shall be subject to the provisions of section 4b-23;
75 (16) be responsible for the care and maintenance of permanent records
76 of institutions of higher education dissolved after September 1, 1969;
77 (17) prepare and present to the Governor and General Assembly
78 legislative proposals affecting the Connecticut State University System,
79 the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak
80 State College; (18) develop and maintain a central higher education
81 information system and establish definitions and data requirements for
82 the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-

83 technical college system and Charter Oak State College; (19) report all
 84 new programs and program changes at the Connecticut State
 85 University System, the regional community-technical college system
 86 and Charter Oak State College to the Office of Higher Education; and
 87 (20) undertake such studies and other activities as will best serve the
 88 higher educational interests of the Connecticut State University
 89 System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter
 90 Oak State College.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>July 1, 2019</i>	10a-6(a)
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HED *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 20 \$	FY 21 \$
Board of Regents for Higher Education	Various - See Below	See Below	See Below

Note: Various=Various

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill may prevent or delay for up to 12 to 16 months any savings or costs anticipated to result from any college or university merger or closure approved by the Board of Regents. The bill requires an affirmative vote of the General Assembly within a specified timeframe equal to 12 to 16 months in order for the merger or closure to proceed (or the proposal is deemed accepted), which delays any anticipated costs or savings. The length of the delay would be equal to the amount of time between the General Assembly receiving merger or closure notice and the date of an affirmative vote (or deemed acceptance). If within the voting timeframe one chamber of the General Assembly rejects the merger or closure, the merger or closure will be halted, which prevents the realization of any savings or costs that would have resulted.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future. The fiscal impact depends on the length of delay described above and the amount of any one-time or annual savings or costs anticipated to result from a merger or closure.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 749*****AN ACT REQUIRING LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL FOR THE MERGER OR CLOSING OF INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill imposes a new condition on the Board of Regents for Higher Education's (BOR's) authority to merge or close institutions within the Connecticut State University or regional community-technical college systems or Charter Oak State College. It also revises the legislative notice requirements that BOR must follow when recommending an institutional merger or closure.

Under current law, BOR may merge or close the above institutions upon a two-thirds vote of its members and after notifying the General Assembly and the Education Committee about the recommended merger or closure. The bill adds a new condition, requiring acceptance of a merger or closure by a majority vote of both the House and Senate. In the event that the legislature fails to act within one year of receiving notice or by adjournment of the next regular legislative session, whichever is later, the merger or closure is deemed accepted under the bill. Conversely, the merger or closure may be rejected by a majority vote of at least one chamber under the bill.

Additionally, the bill requires BOR to notify the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee about institutional mergers or closures the board has voted to recommend, rather than the General Assembly and the Education Committee as required under current law. (Presumably, the bill measures the deadline by which the General Assembly must vote on BOR's recommendation from the date the committee receives notice, since the General Assembly itself no longer directly receives notice under the bill.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/14/2019)