



House of Representatives

File No. 655

General Assembly

February Session, 2024

(Reprint of File No. 236)

Substitute House Bill No. 5363
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 3, 2024

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION.**

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

1 Section 1. Section 10a-11b of the 2024 supplement to the general
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective from passage*):

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

7 (1) The commission shall consist of the following voting members:
8 (A) The president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, the
9 president of The University of Connecticut, or their designees from the
10 Board of Regents for Higher Education and Board of Trustees; (B) the
11 provost of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities and the
12 provost of The University of Connecticut; (C) the [chair] chairperson of

13 the Board of Regents for [the Connecticut State Colleges and
14 Universities] Higher Education, and the Board of Trustees for The
15 University of Connecticut, or the chairs' designees; (D) the president,
16 provost or chair of the board of a large independent institution of higher
17 education in the state, to be selected by the president pro tempore of the
18 Senate; (E) the president, provost or chair of the board of a small
19 independent institution of higher education in the state, to be selected
20 by the speaker of the House of Representatives; (F) a representative from
21 a private career school, to be selected by the executive director of the
22 Office of Higher Education; (G) a teaching faculty representative from
23 the Connecticut State [Universities] University System, to be selected by
24 the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities; (H) a
25 teaching faculty representative from the regional community-technical
26 colleges, to be selected by the president of the Connecticut State Colleges
27 and Universities; (I) a teaching faculty representative from The
28 University of Connecticut, to be selected by the president of The
29 University of Connecticut; (J) a teaching faculty representative from a
30 private career school in the state, to be selected by the executive director
31 of the Office of Higher Education; (K) one member appointed by the
32 president pro tempore of the Senate, who shall be a representative of a
33 large manufacturing employer in the state; (L) one member appointed
34 by the speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall be a
35 representative of a large financial or insurance services employer in the
36 state; (M) one member appointed by the majority leader of the Senate,
37 who shall be a representative of an information technology or digital
38 media employer in the state; (N) one member appointed by the minority
39 leader of the Senate, who shall be a representative of a small business
40 employer in the state; (O) one member appointed by the majority leader
41 of the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of a
42 health care employer in the state; [and] (P) one member appointed by
43 the minority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a
44 representative of a small business employer in the state; and (Q) the
45 chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of
46 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher
47 education and employment advancement. The commission

48 membership shall, where feasible, reflect the state's geographic, racial
49 and ethnic diversity.

50 (2) The following persons shall serve as ex-officio nonvoting
51 members on the commission: (A) The Commissioner of Education, the
52 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development and the
53 Labor Commissioner, or their designees; (B) a representative of an
54 association of the state's independent institutions of higher education,
55 appointed by the Governor; (C) a member of the State Board of
56 Education, as designated by the chairperson of the state board; (D) the
57 superintendent of the technical high school system, or the
58 superintendent's designee; (E) the chief executive officer of Connecticut
59 Innovations, Incorporated, or the chief executive officer's designee; (F)
60 the executive director of the Office of Higher Education; (G) the
61 [chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of
62 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher
63 education and employment advancement;(H) the] Secretary of the
64 Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee; and [(I)]
65 (H) the Chief Workforce Officer.

66 (3) All initial appointments to the commission shall be made not later
67 than June 1, 2024. The Governor, president pro tempore of the Senate
68 and speaker of the House of Representatives shall each appoint [the] a
69 chairperson from among the commission's voting members. [The
70 commission shall elect a vice-chairperson at its first meeting.] Such
71 chairpersons shall jointly schedule the first meeting of the commission,
72 which shall be held not later than July 1, 2024. Any vacancies shall be
73 filled by the appointing authority. The term of each appointed member
74 of the commission shall be three years from the date of appointment,
75 except a member shall continue to serve until such member's successor
76 is appointed. A majority of the commission shall constitute a quorum
77 for the transaction of business. The commission members shall serve
78 without compensation.

79 (4) The commission may (A) seek the advice and participation of any
80 person, organization or state or federal agency it deems necessary to

81 carry out the provisions of this section, [The commission may,] (B)
82 within available appropriations, retain consultants to assist in carrying
83 out its duties, [The commission may] and (C) receive funds from any
84 public or private sources to carry out its activities.

85 (5) The [commission shall be within the Office of Higher Education
86 and shall be responsible for implementing any policies developed by the
87 commission] administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
88 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher
89 education and employment advancement shall serve as the
90 administrative staff of the commission.

91 (b) The commission shall revise and update the higher education
92 strategic master plan adopted in 2015. Such revised strategic master
93 plan shall:

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

96 (2) (A) Assess progress toward the numerical goals established for
97 the years 2020 and 2025 under the strategic master plan adopted in 2015
98 and revise or establish numerical goals for the years [2025] 2026 and
99 2030 to (i) increase the number of people earning a bachelor's degree,
100 associate degree or certificate, (ii) increase the number of people
101 successfully completing coursework at the community college level and
102 the number of people entering the state's workforce, and (iii) eliminate
103 the postsecondary achievement gap between minority students and the
104 general student population, and (B) include specific strategies for
105 meeting such goals, as well as strategies for meeting the goals pursuant
106 to subsection (b) of section 10a-6 and section 10a-11c;

107 (3) Examine and recommend changes to funding policies, practices
108 and accountability in order to (A) align policies and practices with the
109 goals set forth in subsection (b) of section 10a-6 and section 10a-11c; (B)
110 determine how the constituent units shall annually report to the General
111 Assembly and the public in a transparent and thorough manner
112 regarding each constituent unit's expenditures, staffing and state

113 support, including the state appropriation, personnel expenses,
114 personnel fringe benefits, capital improvement bonds and financial aid
115 to students; and (C) improve coordination of appropriation, tuition and
116 financial aid and seek ways to maximize funding through federal and
117 private grants to accomplish state goals; and

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

123 (c) In updating the higher education strategic master plan, the
124 commission shall review the plan developed pursuant to section 10a-6.
125 In addition, the commission may consider the following: (1)
126 Establishing incentives for institutional performance and productivity;
127 (2) increasing financial aid, especially in workforce shortage areas and
128 for minority and first-generation students; (3) expanding dual credit
129 and career pathway opportunities in high schools and aligning such
130 opportunities with institutions of higher education; (4) promoting
131 partnerships with the business community and institutions of higher
132 education to expand work-based learning opportunities for students
133 and retraining and development opportunities for employees; (5)
134 establishing collaborative partnerships between public high schools,
135 community organizations and institutions of higher education to
136 expand college access for underserved and first-generation students; (6)
137 assessing and promoting programs in high school to assist high school
138 students seeking a college track or alternative pathways for post-
139 secondary education, such as vocational and technical opportunities; (7)
140 developing policies to promote and measure retention and graduation
141 rates of students, including graduation rates for students who have
142 transferred among two or more constituent units or public institutions
143 of higher education; (8) developing policies to promote [Transfer]
144 transfer and [Articulation] articulation programs and the Connecticut
145 Automatic Admissions [program] Program state wide; (9) addressing
146 the educational needs of minority, underserved and first-generation

147 students and nontraditional students, including, but not limited to, part-
148 time students, incumbent workers, adult learners, former inmates and
149 immigrants, in order to increase enrollment and retention in institutions
150 of higher education; (10) addressing the affordability of tuition at
151 institutions of higher education and the issue of increased student
152 indebtedness; and (11) developing policies to award credits for prior
153 learning and experience.

154 (d) Not later than September 1, [2024] 2025, the commission shall
155 submit a preliminary report on the development of the update of the
156 higher education strategic master plan and, not later than December 1,
157 [2024] 2025, the commission shall submit the higher education strategic
158 master plan, including specific goals and benchmarks for the years
159 ending [2025] 2026 and 2030, together with any recommendations for
160 appropriate legislation and funding to the Governor and the joint
161 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
162 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement,
163 education, commerce, labor and appropriations and the budgets of state
164 agencies, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.

165 (e) Not later than January 1, [2026] 2027, and annually thereafter, the
166 commission shall submit a report to the Governor and the joint standing
167 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
168 relating to higher education and employment advancement, education,
169 commerce, labor and appropriations and the budgets of state agencies,
170 in accordance with section 11-4a, on the implementation of the plan and
171 progress made toward achieving the goals specified in the plan. The
172 commission may periodically suggest changes to the goals as necessary.

173 (f) [Not later than January 1, 2018, for] For purposes of implementing
174 the higher education strategic master plan pursuant to subsection (b) of
175 this section, the commission [, in collaboration with the Office of Policy
176 and Management,] shall establish two standing subcommittees and may
177 establish any working groups necessary to supplement the work of the
178 subcommittees or work. The [chairperson and vice-chairperson]
179 chairpersons of the commission shall jointly appoint the members of the

180 standing subcommittees and working groups, and may appoint
181 members to such standing subcommittees and working groups who are
182 not members of the commission.

183 (1) One standing subcommittee shall focus on data, metrics and
184 accountability, and build upon the work of the Preschool through 20
185 and Workforce Information Network in its measures and data. Such
186 measures shall be used to assess the progress of each public institution
187 of higher education toward meeting the commission's goals. The
188 subcommittee shall collaborate with the Labor Department to (A)
189 produce periodic reports, capable of being sorted by student age, on the
190 employment status, job retention and earnings of students enrolled in
191 academic and noncredit vocational courses and programs, both prior to
192 enrollment and after completion of such courses and programs, who
193 leave the constituent units upon graduation or otherwise, and (B)
194 develop an annual affordability index for public higher education that
195 is based on state-wide median family income. The subcommittee shall
196 submit annual reports to the commission and the constituent units.

197 (2) One standing subcommittee shall focus on the higher education
198 strategic master plan, analyzing the plans submitted since 2014 and
199 making recommendations to the commission on key areas. The
200 commission may recommend key areas of focus each year and require
201 the standing subcommittee to report to the commission on such key
202 areas.

203 (g) The commission may appoint advisory committees with
204 representatives from public and independent institutions of higher
205 education to study methods and proposals for coordinating efforts of
206 the public institutions of higher education and the independent
207 institutions of higher education to implement the goals identified in
208 section 10a-11c.

209 (h) The commission may review its goals and plans and determine
210 how best to align its work with the work of the Higher Education
211 Innovation and Entrepreneurship Working Group and the Higher

212 Education Entrepreneurship Advisory Committee, established
213 pursuant to sections 32-39s and 32-39t.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	10a-11b

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: None

Municipal Impact: None

The bill makes procedural, conforming and technical changes regarding the Planning Commission for Higher Education and does not result in a fiscal impact.

House "A" eliminates the original bill and its associated fiscal impact, and results in the impact described above

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5363 (as amended by House "A")******AN ACT CONCERNING THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes several changes to the laws governing the Planning Commission for Higher Education, which is charged with revising and updating the 2015 strategic master plan for higher education in Connecticut. Among other things, it extends the commission's reporting deadlines by one year and requires (1) all initial commission appointments to be made by June 1, 2024, and (2) the chairpersons to jointly schedule the commission's first meeting by July 1, 2024.

The bill eliminates requirements that the commission (1) be in the Office of Higher Education (OHE), (2) be responsible for implementing any policies it develops, and (3) collaborate with the Office of Policy and Management in establishing subcommittees and working groups needed to supplement its work. It requires the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee's administrative staff to serve in that capacity for the commission.

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

*House Amendment "A" (1) makes the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee's chairpersons and ranking members voting (rather than nonvoting) members of the commission; (2) adds two additional chairpersons to the commission appointed by the Senate president pro tempore and House speaker, respectively; (3) eliminates the requirement that the commission appoint a vice chairperson at its first meeting; and (4) removes a provision allowing

the commission's chairperson to designate someone with the required qualification for an applicable appointment if an appointment is not made by the deadline.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

The bill makes the chairpersons and ranking members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee voting members of the commission, rather than ex-officio nonvoting members. In doing so, it increases the number of the commission's voting members from 19 to 23, and correspondingly decreases the number of nonvoting members from 14 to 10.

Current law requires the Governor to appoint the commission's chairperson from among its voting members. The bill additionally requires the Senate president pro tempore and House speaker to each appoint a chairperson from these members, which increases the number of commission chairpersons from one to three. The bill also eliminates the requirement that the commission elect a vice chairperson at its first meeting.

Current law requires appointed members to serve three-year terms. The bill requires that they continue to serve until their successor is appointed. It also specifies that a majority of the membership constitutes a quorum for transacting business.

REPORTING DEADLINES

The bill requires the commission to submit its:

1. preliminary report on the development of the updated strategic master plan by September 1, 2025, rather than September 1, 2024, and
2. updated plan by December 1, 2025, rather than December 1, 2024.

The bill correspondingly requires the plan to include specific goals

and benchmarks for 2026 and 2030, rather than 2025 and 2030.

The bill also delays, from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2027, the deadline for the commission to submit its next annual report to the governor and legislature on the plan’s implementation and progress towards achieving its specified goals.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/14/2024)