

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 139

Establishing a Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Virginia.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 8, 1994

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 4, 1994

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth's system of higher education is known for its commitment to high quality and diversity; and

WHEREAS, the system's goals of providing access to all persons who wish to and are able to benefit from higher education; ensuring excellence in teaching, research, and service; and maintaining accountability for the effective use of its resources have remained unchanged; and

WHEREAS, the State Council for Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) is statutorily directed to "promote the development and operation of an educationally and economically sound, vigorous, progressive, and coordinated system of higher education in the Commonwealth," and the system is characterized by its high regard for institutional autonomy; and

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the Legislative Program Review and Evaluation Act, (§ 30-65 et seq.) of Title 30 of the Code of Virginia, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) is conducting a review of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; and

WHEREAS, higher education in Virginia has sustained major budget reductions in recent years and must prepare to deal with fundamental changes in state funding priorities; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's system of higher education now faces an influx of some 70,000 students over the next decade and the task of preparing those students to meet the inevitable changes in the Commonwealth's economy; and

WHEREAS, maintaining the quality of higher education and meeting the needs of 70,000 additional students will require funding that cannot be generated solely through the payment of tuition and student fees; and

WHEREAS, the development of policies and plans to address these concerns and to implement necessary changes is critical to the welfare of the Commonwealth and its citizens; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Virginia be established to review the structure of the state's system of higher education, determine the efficacy of the decentralization of higher education in Virginia, and recommend an appropriate course of action for the direction of higher education in the Commonwealth. The commission shall complete a comprehensive review of all state and federal laws, policies, and regulations affecting higher education in Virginia. The commission shall also (i) evaluate systemwide and institutional policies; (ii) identify any unnecessary duplication of academic programs; (iii) propose incentives to promote greater efficiency, effectiveness, and academic productivity; accountability for student learning; and institutional personnel practices related to faculty productivity, evaluation, and rewards, including promotion and tenure; (iv) identify state policies and regulations that may inhibit state-supported colleges and universities from discharging their missions; (v) assess the relationship between state-supported colleges and universities and their affiliated foundations; and (vi) determine the role of public, independent, nonprofit, and for-profit institutions in providing postsecondary education to the citizens of Virginia.

The Commission shall consist of 17 members as follows: three members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; five members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; one member of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, to be appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of the council; and four citizens representing business and the general public, to be appointed by the Governor; the Director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; and the Secretary of Education.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$12,000.

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia shall provide staff support for the study. The Division of Legislative Services and the staffs of the Senate Committee on Finance and the House Committee on Appropriations shall provide technical assistance for the study. The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall share the findings of its review of the council with the commission, consistent with JLARC reporting procedures.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the commission, upon request.

The commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1996 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint

Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

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