
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)