

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 1155

**PRINTER NO.** 1560

**AMOUNT**

\$52,000

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

April 26, 2024

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Argall

**DESCRIPTION**

Senate Bill 1155 establishes a new Section 2004-I (Higher Education Task Force) for the Higher Education Tax Force to meet, discuss and make recommendations to the General Assembly regarding Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) universities and the Commonwealth's community colleges.

The legislation specifies that the task force's recommendations should be related to: (1) repurposing underutilized facilities; (2) increasing community college transfers to all colleges and universities; (3) opportunities for shared educational programming; (4) opportunities to eliminate inefficient redundancies; (5) expanding adult education and educational opportunities in underserved areas; (6) exporting successful educational models for reducing underutilized facilities; (7) establishing employer incentives to assist employee skills attainment by focusing on career and technology degree programs in high priority occupations for the next five years; (8) increasing student enrollment from other states; and (9) expanding dual enrollment opportunities with high schools.

The legislation provides for the task force to consist of the following members: (1) four representatives of PASSHE who are appointed by its Board of Governors; (2) four representatives from the community colleges who are appointed by a statewide association that represents community colleges; (3) one representative from the Pennsylvania College of Technology; (4) one representative from the Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology; (5) one representative from each of the state-related universities; (6) four representatives from independent colleges in this Commonwealth who are appointed by the Governor from names submitted to the Governor by independent colleges; (7) four representatives from private technical colleges, including private schools of cosmetology; (8) two school district superintendents who are appointed by a statewide organization that represents school district superintendents; and (9) two representatives from career and technology centers appointed by the Governor from names submitted to the Governor by career and technology centers.

The legislation provides for the task force to appoint a chairperson and vice chairperson from its membership. It requires the task force to convene its first meeting by July 15, 2025, and thereafter at the call of the chairperson. It provides that the meetings of the task force shall be subject to the Sunshine Act and for

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members of the task force to be eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses related to their participation in meetings.

The legislation requires the task to prepare a written report of its discussions and recommendations to be filed with the Education Committee of Senate, the Education Committee of the House of Representatives, the Appropriations Committee of the Senate and the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives no later than April 30, 2026.

The legislation is scheduled to take effect immediately.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The enactment of Senate Bill 1155 will cost the Commonwealth approximately \$52,000. This assumes that the task force meets on 10 separate occasions to accomplish its work and each of the 26 task force members incurs meeting expenses of approximately \$200 per meeting. Other costs related to the task force's operations should be minimal and can be accomplished within the operating budgets of the various educational entities represented by members of the task force.