



March 13, 2024

SUMMARY OF BILL AS AMENDED (015786): Makes changes to the *Tennessee Higher Education Freedom of Expression and Transparency Act*. Requires a public institution of higher education (institution) to investigate each report of an alleged violation related to a restriction on divisive concepts, discrimination, or adverse treatment that occurred at the institution. Requires the investigation to be completed within a timely manner and for the institution to take steps to correct any violation found to have occurred. Requires each institution to report the results of each investigation to the Comptroller of the Treasury (COT) no later than 10 days after the investigation is completed.

Requires an institution to update the COT at least once every 30 days as to the status of an open investigation. Requires the COT to notify the institution and the Joint Government Operations Committee in writing of an institution's noncompliance, and the respective institution is required to appear before the Joint Government Operations Committee no later than 60 days from the date of the COT's written notice to report on the institution's noncompliance.

Requires the Comptroller to report to the Education Committee of the Senate and the Education Administration Committee of the House of Representatives if the Comptroller receives more than 10 reports from an institution in any one academic year.

FISCAL IMPACT OF BILL AS AMENDED:

NOT SIGNIFICANT

Assumptions for the bill as amended:

- Based on information provided by the Locally Governed Institutions, the University of Tennessee System and the Tennessee Board of Regents, the institutions will be able to amend any policies and can accommodate the required provisions within existing resources, without a significant increase in state expenditures.
- It is assumed that all institutions will adhere to timely investigations and will take any corrective actions necessary.
- Based on information provided the Office of Research and Education Accountability (OREA) within the Comptroller of the Treasury, OREA can comply with the proposed legislation within existing resources, without a significant increase in state expenditures.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krista Lee Carsner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

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