

1 S. 40

2 Introduced by Senators Pollina, Collins, Cummings, Doyle, Lyons, Westman,
3 and Zuckerman

4 Referred to Committee on

5 Date:

6 Subject: Education; appropriations; state college funding

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish an
8 interim committee that will develop policies to restore the 1980 ratio of state
9 funding to student tuition at Vermont State Colleges and to make higher
10 education more affordable.

11 An act relating to establishing an interim committee that will develop
12 policies to restore the 1980 ratio of state funding to student tuition at
13 Vermont State Colleges and to make higher education more affordable

14 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

15 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

16 The General Assembly finds that:

17 (1) In 1980, 51 percent of the revenue supporting our Vermont State
18 Colleges came from state appropriations and 49 percent came from student
19 tuition. Now, after decades of underfunding, state appropriations provide less
20 than 20 percent of the Vermont State Colleges' revenue and over 80 percent

1 comes from student tuition. This is a huge cost shift onto students and
2 families, many of whom simply cannot afford it.

3 (2) On a per-capita basis, Vermont now provides less state support to its
4 public colleges than almost any other state.

5 (3) In FY 2011–2012, Vermont ranked 49th among the states, next to
6 last, in state appropriations per \$1,000.00 of personal income.

7 (4) In the 21 years between 1990 and 2011, the state appropriation per
8 full-time Vermont student at Vermont State Colleges fell from \$3,342.00 to
9 \$3,231.00.

10 (5) Eighty-one percent of the students at Vermont State Colleges are
11 from Vermont, and 54 percent of these students are the first in their families to
12 attend college. Eighty-four percent of Vermont State College graduates stay in
13 Vermont.

14 Sec. 2. INTERIM STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING

15 (a) Creation of committee. There is created the Vermont Higher Education
16 Affordability Committee to develop policies that shall make the State Colleges
17 and the University of Vermont more affordable for Vermont residents by
18 lowering costs and restoring the 1980 ratio of state funding to tuition costs.

19 (b) Membership. The Vermont Higher Education Affordability Committee
20 shall be composed of nine members. Two members of the Committee shall be
21 members of the General Assembly. The Committee on Committees of the

1 Senate shall appoint one member of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House
2 shall appoint one member of the House. Seven members of the Committee
3 shall be as follows:

4 (1) one faculty member of the University of Vermont to be appointed by
5 United Professions American Federation of Teachers Vermont;

6 (2) one faculty member and one staff member of the Vermont State
7 Colleges to be appointed by United Professions American Federation of
8 Teachers Vermont;

9 (3) the President of the University of Vermont;

10 (4) the Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges; and

11 (5) two students, one from the University of Vermont and one from the
12 Vermont State Colleges, appointed by their respective student government
13 associations.

14 (c) Powers and duties.

15 (1) The Vermont Higher Education Affordability Committee shall
16 develop policies to:

17 (A) lower student and family costs so that Vermont colleges are more
18 affordable for Vermonters;

19 (B) increase resources for higher education instruction;

20 (C) return to the 1980 level of state funding to student tuition support
21 ratio;

1 (D) reduce student debt;

2 (E) retain and recruit higher education faculty and staff; and

3 (F) implement methods of income sensitivity.

4 (2) In developing these policies, the Committee shall consider:

5 (A) higher education funding for state colleges and universities in
6 other states, with a particular focus on tuition ratios;

7 (B) the best policies for increasing the enrollment of Vermont
8 students and keeping students in Vermont after they graduate from college;

9 (C) how Vermont State Colleges and the University of Vermont
10 spend their state funding;

11 (D) how to increase spending on full-time faculty, classrooms,
12 technology, and facility improvements, as opposed to administration;

13 (E) how to take advantage of online education options, especially
14 options that may increase out-of-state enrollment;

15 (F) comparing the percentage of Vermont students to out-of-state
16 students enrolled at Vermont colleges and universities in 1980 and 2012, and
17 which institutions students attended;

18 (G) the portability of Vermont Student Assistance Corporation Inc.
19 funds; and

20 (H) the impact of Vermont State College graduates on Vermont's
21 economy and on job creation and retention.

1 (3) For purposes of its study of these issues, the Vermont Higher
2 Education Affordability Committee shall have the assistance of the Office of
3 Legislative Council and the Joint Fiscal Office.

4 (d) Report. By November 15, 2013, the Committee shall report to the
5 General Assembly on its findings and any recommendations for legislative
6 action.

7 (e) Number of meetings, term, and reimbursement. The Committee may
8 meet no more than six times, and shall cease to exist on November 15, 2013.
9 For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly,
10 legislative members of the Committee shall be entitled to compensation and
11 reimbursement for expenses under 2 V.S.A. § 406, and other members of the
12 Committee who are not employees of the State of Vermont shall be reimbursed
13 at the per diem rate under 32 V.S.A. § 1010.

14 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

15 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2013.