

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Tuesday, May 10, 2022

1:00 PM

Capitol Extension, Room E1.028

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Higher Education was held on Tuesday, May 10, 2022, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.028, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Brandon Creighton, Chair
Senator Royce West, Vice Chair
Senator César Blanco
Senator Borris Miles
Senator Angela Paxton
Senator Drew Springer
Senator Larry Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Brian Birdwell
Senator Judith Zaffirini

The chair called the meeting to order at 1:15 PM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

The chair laid out the following interim charge on enrollment trends: Study the postsecondary enrollment trends across all sectors and levels of higher education in Texas, with a review on specific challenges to enrollment. Consider the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on direct high school-to-college enrollment, first-time college enrollment, transferability, and retention rates, as well as the overall impact on community college enrollment. Make recommendations on specific methods to address disparities and pandemic impacts relating to enrollment trends in order to achieve Texas' higher education goals in building a Talent Strong Texas.

Witnesses providing invited testimony are shown on the attached list.

The chair laid out the following interim charge on monitoring: Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Higher Education passed by the 87th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:

House Bill 3767, relating to measures to support the alignment of education and workforce development in the state with state workforce needs, including the establishment of the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative; and

Senate Bill 1102, relating to the establishment of the Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE) Program to support workforce education.

Witnesses providing invited testimony are shown on the attached list.

The chair laid out the following interim charge on workforce education: Evaluate state efforts to support access to work-based learning and microcredential opportunities, including apprenticeships, industry-based certificates and certifications, as well as competency-based education. Assess the potential benefits of expanding access to work-based learning, apprenticeships, microcredentials, and industry-based certifications that are aligned to workforce needs and provide in-demand workforce skills and competencies. Evaluate existing resources and programs at institutions, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Workforce Commission to support these opportunities and ultimately reach Tri-Agency goals. Consider recommendations to standardize these programs in order increase postsecondary degree completions.

Senator West assumed the chair.

Senator Creighton resumed the chair.

Witnesses providing invited testimony are shown on the attached list.

Senator Taylor assumed the chair.

The chair laid out the following interim charge on teaching and health care workforce participation: Review financial aid and scholarship opportunities in Texas related to teaching, health care, and law enforcement, and examine methods to increase participation in these and other high-demand fields. In particular, study the participation rates of the Math and Science

Scholars Loan Repayment Program, the Peace Officer Loan Repayment Program, and the Nursing Corps Loan Repayment Program, and make recommendations on ways to increase participation rates in each area.

Witnesses providing invited testimony are shown on the attached list.

The chair laid out the following interim charge on funding Permanent University Fund: Review the history and use of the Permanent University Fund for the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University, and explore the creation of a new legacy fund to address the needs of all other higher education institutions in Texas. Make recommendations on methods to streamline other existing research funds and finance research academic institutions in Texas.

Senator Creighton resumed the chair.

Witnesses providing invited testimony are shown on the attached list.

Senator Taylor assumed the chair.

There being no further business, Senator Taylor moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.



Senator Brandon Creighton, Chair

Abby Johnston, Clerk