

Tab 1	SB 114 by Trumbull ; Identical to H 01097 Insurance Research				
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Tab 2	SB 1624 by Calatayud ; Compare to H 00355 Higher Education				
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707800	A	S	AHE, Calatayud	btw L.445 - 446:	03/21 12:25 PM
112218	A	S	AHE, Calatayud	Delete L.741 - 858:	03/21 12:25 PM

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Senator Harrell, Chair
Senator Bradley, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Monday, March 24, 2025
TIME: 4:00—6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Toni Jennings Committee Room, 110 Senate Building

MEMBERS: Senator Harrell, Chair; Senator Bradley, Vice Chair; Senators Burgess, Calatayud, Davis, Leek, Smith, and Trumbull

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	SB 114 Trumbull (Identical H 1097)	Insurance Research; Renaming the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center to the Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management; requiring the center to collaborate with the Office of Insurance Regulation to produce an annual report analyzing the property insurance market in this state; requiring the center to use the public hurricane loss projection model when necessary; requiring the office to contract with the center to manage the public hurricane loss projection model; providing for a type two transfer of the public hurricane loss projection model from Florida International University to Florida State University, etc.	
		AHE 03/24/2025 AP	
2	SB 1624 Calatayud (Compare H 355, H 1307, S 1618)	Higher Education; Authorizing the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to develop contracts or agreements with institutions in the State University System for a specified purpose; providing tuition assistance to active members of the Florida State Guard; specifying that the President of the University of Florida appoints the members of the scientific advisory council within the Florida Center for Brain Tumor Research; revising the qualifications for members of the Assistive Technology Advisory Council; revising the date by which the Department of Education is required to publish an annual report on apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs, etc.	
		HE 03/10/2025 Favorable AHE 03/24/2025 FP	

TAB	OFFICE and APPOINTMENT (HOME CITY)	FOR TERM ENDING	COMMITTEE ACTION
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Senate Confirmation Hearing: A public hearing will be held for consideration of the below-named executive appointments to the offices indicated.

Board of Trustees, Florida A & M University

6	Ellison, Earnie, Jr. (Huntsville)	01/06/2030
7	Perry, Belvin, Jr. ()	01/06/2026

COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDAAppropriations Committee on Higher Education
Monday, March 24, 2025, 4:00—6:00 p.m.

TAB	OFFICE and APPOINTMENT (HOME CITY)	FOR TERM ENDING	COMMITTEE ACTION
8	Gainey, Emery A. ()	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees of Pasco-Hernando State College			
3	Allocco, John, Jr. (Weeki Wachee)	05/31/2027	
Board of Trustees of South Florida State College			
4	Donaldson, Devon P. (Avon Park)	05/31/2026	
Board of Trustees of Valencia College			
5	Bradley, Blair (Orlando)	05/31/2026	
Board of Trustees, Florida Atlantic University			
9	Satter, Jonathan R. (North Palm Beach)	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees, Florida State University			
10	Collins, Peter H. (Tampa)	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees, Florida International University			
11	Duart, Carlos (Tallahassee)	01/06/2030	
12	Tano, Alberto R. (Coral Gables)	01/06/2028	
13	Lebena, Jesus (Miami)	01/06/2030	
14	Heisel, George Thomas ()	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees, New College of Florida			
15	Christaldi, Ronald A. (Tampa)	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees, University of Florida			
16	Cole, Richard P. (Coral Gables)	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees, University of North Florida			
17	Boyle, John H. (Jacksonville)	01/06/2028	
18	Demetree, Jack C., Jr. (Jacksonville)	01/06/2028	

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
Other Related Meeting Documents			

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education

BILL: SB 114

INTRODUCER: Senator Trumbull

SUBJECT: Insurance Research

DATE: March 21, 2025

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Knudson	Elwell	AHE	Pre-meeting
2.			AP	

I. Summary:

SB 114 creates the Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management (the Center) at the Florida State University College of Business, Department of Risk Management. The Center replaces the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center (Storm Risk Center). The Center will conduct research into all lines of insurance offered in Florida and catastrophic risk management generally, with a focus on property insurance issues. The previous Storm Risk Center conducted research focused solely on issues related to catastrophic storm loss.

The Center's purpose is to:

- Develop, conduct, evaluate, promote, and disseminate accurate and timely research on issues related to the state's insurance market and risk management.
- Assist the Legislature in developing and evaluating evidence-based policy options and making recommendations related to insurance and risk management in this state.
- Identify emerging issues in the insurance market.
- Provide insight regarding the accessibility and affordability of insurance products.
- Assist in identifying and developing education and research grant funding opportunities among higher education institutions in this state and the private sector.

The Center is directed to conduct, coordinate, and disseminate research and information that benefits businesses, consumers, and public policymakers or that is expected to have an immediate impact on policy and practices related to the state's insurance markets generally or catastrophic event preparedness.

The bill requires the Center to conduct research responsive to joint or individual inquiries from the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives regarding insurance or risk management. This will allow policymakers to have the benefit of academic research when considering legislation related to insurance and risk management.

The bill also directs the Center to cooperate with the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) in conducting research and specifies that the Center may conduct research responsive to requests made by the OIR. Biennially, the Center will produce a report analyzing the Florida property insurance marketplace and making recommendations to improve the availability and affordability of property insurance.

The bill transfers the Public Hurricane Loss Projection Model (Public Model) from Florida International University (FIU) to Florida State University (FSU) through a type two transfer and requires the OIR to contract with the Center to manage the Public Model. The Center is directed to cooperate with other entities and universities, including FIU, to develop and maintain the Public Model, which clarifies that the Legislature intends that the team developing and maintaining the model must continue to include experts from multiple universities and other entities. The Center is directed to constantly evaluate and update the Public Model so that it will have the same functionalities as other models approved by the Florida Commission on Hurricane Loss Projection Methodology.

The bill appropriates \$5 million in recurring funds and \$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to FSU for the purpose of establishing and maintaining the Center. **See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

II. Present Situation:

Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center

In 2007, the Legislature created¹ the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center (Storm Risk Center) within the Department of Risk Management of Florida State University's College of Business. The Storm Risk Center was created to: (1) promote and disseminate research on issues related to catastrophic storm loss; (2) assist in identifying and developing education and research grant funding opportunities among higher education institutions in this state and the private sector; and (3) support the state's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from catastrophic storms.

The Legislature directed the Storm Risk Center to:

- Coordinate and disseminate research efforts expected to have an immediate impact on policy and practices related to catastrophic storm preparedness.
- Facilitate Florida's preparedness for and responsiveness to catastrophic storms by coordinating and disseminating information related to catastrophic storm risk management that would benefit businesses, consumers, and public policy makers.
- Areas of interest include storm forecasting, loss modeling, building construction, and risk management strategies.
- Create and promote studies that enhance educational options for risk management and insurance students.
- Publish and disseminate findings.

¹ Chapter 2007-90, s.24, L.O.F.

- Organize and sponsor conferences, symposia, and workshops to educate consumers and policymakers.²

The Legislature annually appropriated funds for the operation of the Storm Risk Center beginning in the 2007-2008 fiscal year through the 2015-2016 fiscal year. A total of \$11.475 million was appropriated, of which \$3.8 million was vetoed by the Governor, resulting in the Storm Risk Center receiving \$7.925 million. The appropriations history is as follows:

Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center at FSU (43500400 / 100500)					
Appropriation History					
Fiscal Year	GAA SA Line #	Appropriation	BOB	Vetoed	Total
FY 06-07					-
FY 07-08	SA 2662A	1,000,000		(1,000,000)	-
2007-C	SA 544A	750,000			750,000
FY 08-09	SA 2539A	3,000,000			3,000,000
FY 09-10	SA 2463A	975,000			975,000
FY 10-11	SA 2545A	700,000	250,000	(950,000)	-
FY 11-12	SA 2341A	950,000			950,000
FY 12-13	SA 2488A	350,000		(350,000)	-
FY 13-14	SA 2410A	750,000			750,000
FY 14-15	SA 2447	1,500,000			1,500,000
FY 15-16	SA 2434A	1,500,000		(1,500,000)	-

Throughout its history, the Storm Risk Center published various academic studies and papers and performed research in conjunction with state entities. Titles of some such academic studies and papers included:

- *The 30th Anniversary of Hurricane Andrew: Evolution of the Florida Homeowners Insurance Market*³
- *Evaluating the Public Financing for Florida's Wind Risk*⁴
- *The Impact of Hurricane Mitigation and Inspection Information on House Prices*⁵
- *Market Implications of Public Policy Interventions: The Case of Florida's Property Insurance Market*⁶

Research carried out by the Storm Risk Center on behalf of state entities⁷ included:

² Section 1004.647, F.S.

³ Nyce, C. M., *The 30th Anniversary of Hurricane Andrew: Evolution of the Florida Homeowners Insurance Market*, Risk Management and Insurance Review, 25(3), 239-270, (2022).

⁴ Medders, L. Nicholson, J., *Evaluating the Public Financing for Florida's Wind Risk*, Risk Management and Insurance Review, Vol. 21, No. 1, 117-139 (2018).

⁵ Gatzlaff, D. H., McCullough, K., Medders, L., & Nyce, C., *The Impact of Hurricane Mitigation and Inspection Information on House Prices*, Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics (2018).

⁶ Medders, L. A., Nyce, C. M., & Karl, J. B., *Market Implications of Public Policy Interventions: The Case of Florida's Property Insurance Market*, Risk Management and Insurance Review, 17(2), 183-214(2014).

⁷ Charles Nyce, *The Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center Partial Publication List* (2025). On file with the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee.

- Florida Division of Emergency Management – Helping Local Governments Design Financing Programs for Residential Wind Mitigation and Home Hardening Projects.
- Florida Division of Emergency Management – Home Hardening Incentives Programs: Innovative Finance Concepts for Wind Mitigation and Home Hardening.
- Department of Financial Services – Hurricane Mitigation Inspection System Study.
- Division of Risk Management – Mitigation Feature Inventory and Analysis of State-owned Buildings.

The Storm Risk Center is no longer operating, as the Legislature ceased appropriations for the center after the 2015-2016 fiscal year, and the center lacked other significant sources of funding.

Public Hurricane Loss Projection Model

The National Association of Insurance Commissioners defines a catastrophe model as:

“[A] computerized process that simulates thousands of plausible catastrophic events scenarios. Simulated event scenarios are based on realistic event parameters drawing data from meteorological history, geology, and geography to probabilistically model what could happen in the future. These scenarios are used by the models to quantify the expected damages for an underlying portfolio of exposures using an engineering approach. Lastly, the insured loss is calculated by incorporating underlying insurance policy coverage. These models provide valuable insights for risk identification, risk quantification and risk management strategies by taking a multi-disciplinary approach of science engineering and mathematics/statistics.”

Prior to Hurricane Andrew, property insurers measured the risk of catastrophic hurricane losses primarily through five to 25 years of historic loss data.⁸ The inadequacy of this ratemaking approach was demonstrated in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, which made landfall in south Florida on August 24, 1992. The storm caused \$20 billion in insured losses, which was the largest loss event at the time.⁹ Eleven property insurers became insolvent as a direct result of Hurricane Andrew. This led the insurance industry to adopt catastrophe modeling to better estimate the risk of hurricane losses.

Catastrophe models are generally composed of four modules that are used in conjunction with one another to project risk:

- **Catastrophe Probability:** A mathematical simulation with many simulated events representing a wide range of plausible scenarios. This calculates the probable location, size, intensity, and probable frequency of catastrophes.
- **Vulnerability:** Quantifies the expected damage from catastrophes of various intensities based on the characteristics of the insured property such as construction techniques and elevation.

⁸ American Academy of Actuaries, *Uses of Catastrophe Model Output*, pg. 4 (2018).

⁹ National Association of Insurance Commissioners, *Catastrophe Models (Property)*, (March 20, 2024) <https://content.naic.org/insurance-topics/catastrophe-models-%28property%29> (last visited March 5, 2025).

- Exposure: Location specific information such as the location of the risk and insurance policy terms such as coverage limits, deductibles, and exclusions.
- Financial: A calculation of the financial losses from all the catastrophe event scenarios, which are aggregated to create a loss probability distribution. The loss distribution is used to project expected losses and the likelihood of different levels of loss.¹⁰

In 1995, the Legislature responded to the increased use of computer modeling in ratemaking to project hurricane risk by creating the Florida Commission of Hurricane Loss Projection Methodology (methodology commission). The methodology commission is an independent panel of experts¹¹ that provides actuarially sophisticated guidelines and standards for projection of hurricane losses. Any model used in rate filings under s. 627.062, F.S., must be accepted by the methodology commission as conforming to the standards of the commission.¹² In 2014, the Legislature expanded the scope of the methodology commission to include flood projection models for use in ratemaking for personal lines residential flood insurance coverage.¹³

In 2000, the Legislature authorized the Public Hurricane Loss Projection Model (Public Model). The Public Model estimates loss costs and probable maximum loss levels caused by hurricanes for residential property.¹⁴ The Legislature intended that the Public Model would be more transparent than private models because its assumptions and methodologies would be open to public review and inspection.¹⁵

The Public Model is the property of the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) and, in 2001, the OIR contracted with Florida International University (FIU) to develop the Public Model. The Public Model was activated in March 2006, and found acceptable by the methodology commission in August 2007.¹⁶ Florida International University manages the Public Model through FIU's Laboratory for Insurance, Economic and Financial Research at FIU's International Hurricane Research Center. The Public Model has been submitted to, and approved by, the methodology commission at statutorily required intervals¹⁷, most recently on July 19, 2023.¹⁸ The Public Model will remain approved by the methodology commission until November 1,

¹⁰ See *id.*

¹¹ Florida Hurricane Commission on Hurricane Loss Projection Methodology, *Commission Structure*, pgs. 24-26. https://fchlpm.sbafla.com/media/c2dnlvah/20231101_structure.pdf (last visited March 9, 2025).

¹² Section 627.0628(1)(c), F.S.

¹³ Chapter 2014-80, L.O.F.

¹⁴ See Florida Hurricane Loss Projection Model, *Services for You*, at <https://fphlm.cs.fiu.edu/services.html> (last visited March 9, 2025).

¹⁵ Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability, *Steps Could Be Taken to Reduce the Public Hurricane Loss Projection Model's Reliance on State Funding*, pg. 2 (Report No. 11-25, December 2011).

¹⁶ See *id.*

¹⁷ See annual submissions to the methodology commission at <https://fchlpm.sbafla.com/model-submissions/hurricane-model-submissions/> and the methodology commission letters of acceptability at <https://fchlpm.sbafla.com/documents-and-standards/model-acceptability/letters-of-acceptability/> and a summary of methodology commission approvals of the Public Model at <https://fchlpm.sbafla.com/media/nacnv0fy/fphlm-7-19-23.pdf> (last visited March 9, 2025).

¹⁸ Letter from the methodology commission to Dr. Shahid Hamid (July 19, 2023). <https://fchlpm.sbafla.com/media/cezjszpf/fiu-acceptability-letter-21-standards-7-19-23.pdf> (last visited March 9, 2025).

2025.¹⁹ On October 1, 2024, the OIR renewed and amended its contract with FIU to manage the Public Model through June 30, 2025.²⁰

The primary users of the Public Model are public entities, though private entities may contract to use it. The OIR uses the Public Model to evaluate the hurricane components of property insurance rate filings and to conduct “catastrophe stress tests” to evaluate the ability of property insurers operating in this state to remain solvent in the aftermath of a hurricane. In the aftermath of hurricanes, the OIR reviews loss estimates developed by the Public Model and compares those estimates with the actual losses incurred.²¹ The State Board of Administration uses the Public Model, along with other private sector models, to develop the reimbursement premiums for the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund.²² Citizens Property Insurance Corporation uses the Public Model and other private sector models in ratemaking.²³

The hurricane component of the Public Model is developed by experts in the fields of actuarial science, computer science, finance, engineering, meteorology, and statistics.²⁴ Experts in storm surge, waves, and inland flood were added to the team to develop the flood component of the Public Model. These experts are employed by various entities: Florida International University, Florida State University, University of Florida, Florida International University, University of Missouri-Kansas City, Notre Dame University, Rutgers University, the University of Oklahoma, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, AMI Risk Consultants, and Meta.

Ongoing development and maintenance of the Public Model is funded through legislative appropriations. For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Legislature appropriated \$1.273 million to OIR to enhance the Public Model. For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the Legislature appropriated \$2.273 million to enhance the Public Model.

Type Two Transfers

Section 20.06, F.S., provides for the reorganization of the executive branch of state government by transferring specified agencies, programs and functions to other specified departments, commissions, or offices. The transfers provided by s. 20.06, F.S., are intended to supplement but not supplant the requirements of s. 6, Art. III of the State Constitution. There are two types of transfers created by this statute – “type one” transfers and “type two” transfers.

A type one transfer is the transferring intact of an existing agency or department so that the agency or department becomes a unit of another agency or department.

¹⁹ See *id.*

²⁰ See Office of Insurance Regulation and Florida International University, *Renewal No. 1 and Amendment No. 1 to Contract 1980F-23-OIR-FIU Between the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation and the Florida International University Board of Trustees* (October 1, 2024) (on file with the Florida Senate Banking and Insurance Committee).

²¹ See *id.* at pg. 2.

²² Paragon Strategic Solutions, *Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund 2024 Ratemaking Formula Report*, pg. 4 (March 21, 2024), <https://fhcf.sbafla.com/media/jtunioka/2024-ratemaking-formula-report-final.pdf> (last visited March 9, 2025).

²³ See Office of Insurance Regulation, *Public Rate Hearing Citizens Property Insurance Corporation*, pgs. 24-26 (August 1, 2024), https://www.florid.com/docs-sf/default-source/public-hearings/citizens-hearing-2024/august-2024-citizens-rate-hearing-slides_final.pdf?sfvrsn=2b408b5c_4 (last visited March 9, 2025).

²⁴ See Florida Hurricane Loss Projection Model, *People*, at <https://fphlm.cs.fiu.edu/people.html> (last visited March 9, 2025).

A type two transfer is the merging into another agency or department of an existing agency or department or a program, activity, or function thereof. If certain identifiable units or subunits, programs, activities, or functions are removed from the existing agency or department, or are abolished, it is the merging into an agency or department of the existing agency or department with the certain identifiable units or subunits, programs, activities, or functions removed therefrom or abolished. Type two transfers are the means to transfer a particular program or activity from one state entity to another state entity.

In a type two transfer:

- The transferred agency, department, program, activity, or function retains its statutory powers, duties, and functions, and its records, personnel, property, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, or other funds, except those transferred elsewhere or abolished. The foregoing are transferred to the new agency or department. The transfer of segregated funds must retain the relation between program and revenue source as provided by law.
- The head of the agency or department to which an existing agency or department or a program, activity, or function thereof is transferred may establish units or subunits to which the agency or department is assigned, and to assign administrative authority for identifiable programs, activities, or functions, to the extent authorized in ch. 20, F.S.
- The administrative rules of any agency or department involved in the transfer which are in effect immediately before the transfer remain in effect until specifically changed in the manner provided by law.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management

Section 1 amends s. 1004.647, F.S., establishing the Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management (the Center) at the Florida State University College of Business, Department of Risk Management. The Excellence in Insurance Center essentially recreates and expands the research scope of the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center (Storm Risk Center).

Purpose

The bill provides that the Center's purpose is to:

- Develop, conduct, evaluate, promote, and disseminate accurate and timely research on issues related to the state's insurance market and risk management. This broadens the Center's purpose beyond catastrophic storm loss.
- Assist the Legislature in developing and evaluating evidence-based policy options and making recommendations related to insurance and risk management in this state.
- Identify emerging issues in the insurance market.
- Provide insight regarding the accessibility and affordability of insurance products.
- Assist in identifying and developing education and research grant funding opportunities among higher education institutions in this state and the private sector.

Research – Areas of Inquiry

The bill amends statutory language governing the Center’s activities. The Center is directed to expand its research efforts beyond catastrophic storm risk management and instead conduct, coordinate, and disseminate research and information that benefits businesses, consumers, and public policymakers or that is expected to have an immediate impact on policy and practices related to the state’s insurance markets generally or catastrophic event preparedness.

Current law specifies that the research activities of the Storm Risk Center may include storm forecasting, loss modeling, building construction and mitigation, and risk management strategies. The bill retains those research topics and expands the Center’s areas of research to also include:

- This state’s insurance-related consumer protections;
- Insurer claims-handling and adjudication practices in this state in comparison with insurer practices in other states;
- Cost factors in the reinsurance, catastrophe bond, and insurance-linked securities markets;
- The Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund;
- The effectiveness of the My Safe Florida Home Program; and
- Health insurance, life insurance, workers’ compensation, motor vehicle insurance, or any other type of insurance sold within Florida.

Research - Cooperation and Collaboration with the Office of Insurance Regulation

The bill directs the Center to cooperate with the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) in conducting research and specifies that the Center may conduct research responsive to requests made by OIR. The Center must specifically collaborate with OIR to create a report analyzing the Florida property insurance market, projecting the market’s outlook over one year, five years, 10 years, and 20 years. The report must recommend ways to improve the available and affordability of property insurance in this state and to facilitate the state’s preparedness for and responsiveness to catastrophic events. The OIR must cooperate with the center in providing data necessary to complete the report. The initial report must be published on or before July 1, 2026, and updated at least once every two years.

Research – Responding to Legislative Requests

The bill requires the Center to conduct research responsive to joint or individual inquiries from the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives regarding insurance or risk management. This will allow legislative policymakers to have the benefit of academic research that is relevant to public policy proposals related to insurance and risk management being considered by the Legislature.

Research – Public Hurricane Loss Projection Model

The bill directs the Center to use the public hurricane loss projection model when needed to meet the center’s statutory obligations.

Public Sector Actuarial Practice

The bill requires the Center to collaborate with the OIR and the Actuarial Science Program of the Department of Mathematics at Florida State University to encourage actuarial science students to practice in the public sector in the fields of risk management and insurance.

Public Hurricane Loss Projection Model

Section 2 amends s. 627.06281, F.S., regarding the Public Hurricane Loss Projection Model.

Management by the Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management

The bill requires the OIR to contract with the Center to manage the public hurricane loss projection model. This will have the effect of moving the management of the public model from FIU to FSU. The Center is directed to cooperate with other entities and universities, including FIU, to develop and maintain the Public Model, which clarifies that the Legislature intends that the team developing and maintaining the model must continue to include experts from multiple universities and other entities.

Updates to and Functionality of the Public Model

The Center is directed to constantly evaluate and update the Public Model so that it will have the same functionalities as other models approved by the Florida Commission on Hurricane Loss Projection Methodology. Doing so should expand the usefulness of the Public Model. The OIR would derive greater usefulness from the Public Model in evaluating rate filings, conducting “stress tests” of property insurers ability to withstand major hurricanes, and conducting research. Similarly, the Center would likely find the Public Model more useful when conducting research. Private market insurers would also be more likely to use the Public Model in rate filings if it contains functionalities comparable to private market models.

Use by the Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management

The bill specifies that the Center may use the Public Model, including all assumptions, factors, and detailed loss results to meet the Center’s statutory obligations. The bill specifies that fees for private sector use of the Public Model do not apply to the Center.

Type Two Transfer of the Public Model to Florida State University

Section 3 requires a type two transfer from FIU to FSU of all powers, duties, functions, records, offices, personnel, associated administrative support positions, property, pending issues, existing contracts, administrative authority, administrative rules, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, and any other funds relating to the public hurricane loss projection model.

Section 4 makes technical conforming changes to s. 627.06292, F.S., regarding a statutorily required annual report summarizing loss data and associated exposure data collected as part of the management of the Public Model. The bill strikes references to FIU and inserts references to FSU.

Appropriation

Section 5 appropriates \$5 million in recurring funds and \$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to FSU for the purpose of establishing and maintaining the Center.

Effective Date

Section 6 provides an effective date of July 1, 2025.

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill appropriates \$5 million in recurring funds and \$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to Florida State University for the purpose of establishing and maintaining the Center.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1004.647, 627.06281, and 627.06292.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Trumbull

2-00992C-25

2025114__

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to insurance research; amending s.
 3 1004.647, F.S.; renaming the Florida Catastrophic
 4 Storm Risk Management Center to the Florida Center for
 5 Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management; revising
 6 the purpose of the center; revising the duties of the
 7 center; providing areas of interest for research;
 8 requiring the center to collaborate with the Office of
 9 Insurance Regulation to produce an annual report
 10 analyzing the property insurance market in this state;
 11 requiring that the report be published by a specified
 12 date and updated at least biennially; requiring the
 13 center to develop a program with the office and the
 14 Actuarial Science Program at Florida State University
 15 for a specified purpose; requiring the center to use
 16 the public hurricane loss projection model when
 17 necessary; requiring the center to conduct research in
 18 response to inquiries from the Legislature;
 19 authorizing the center to conduct research in response
 20 to requests from the office; amending s. 627.06281,
 21 F.S.; requiring the office to contract with the center
 22 to manage the public hurricane loss projection model;
 23 requiring the center to update the model; providing
 24 that certain fees charged for access and use of the
 25 model do not apply to the Florida Center for
 26 Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management; providing
 27 for a type two transfer of the public hurricane loss
 28 projection model from Florida International University
 29 to Florida State University; amending s. 627.06292,

Page 1 of 8

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

2-00992C-25

2025114__

30 F.S.; making conforming changes; providing an
 31 appropriation; providing an effective date.
 32

33 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

34
 35 Section 1. Section 1004.647, Florida Statutes, is amended
 36 to read:

37 1004.647 Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and
 38 Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center.—The Florida Center
 39 for Excellence in Insurance and Catastrophic Storm Risk
 40 Management Center is created at the Florida State University,
 41 College of Business, Department of Risk Management. The purpose
 42 of the center is to develop, conduct, evaluate, promote, and
 43 disseminate accurate and timely research on issues related to
 44 this state's insurance market and risk management, to assist the
 45 Legislature in developing and evaluating evidence-based policy
 46 options and making recommendations related to insurance and risk
 47 management in this state, to identify emerging issues in the
 48 insurance market, to provide insight regarding accessibility and
 49 affordability of insurance products, ~~eatastrophic storm loss~~ and
 50 to assist in identifying and developing education and research
 51 grant funding opportunities among higher education institutions
 52 in this state and the private sector. ~~The purpose of the~~
 53 ~~activities of the center is to support the state's ability to~~
 54 ~~prepare for, respond to, and recover from catastrophic storms.~~
 55 The center shall do all of the following:

56 (1) Conduct, coordinate, and disseminate research efforts
 57 and information that would benefit businesses, consumers, and
 58 public policy makers or that are expected to have an immediate

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impact on policy and practices related to this state's insurance
markets or catastrophic event storm preparedness. The center
 shall cooperate with the Office of Insurance Regulation in
 conducting research. Areas of research may include:

- (a) Storm forecasting and loss modeling;
- (b) This state's insurance-related consumer protections;
- (c) Insurer claims-handling and adjudication practices in
this state in comparison with insurer practices in other states;
- (d) Cost factors in the reinsurance, catastrophe bond, and
insurance-linked securities markets;
- (e) The resilience of building construction and mitigation
techniques;
- (f) The Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund;
- (g) The effectiveness of the My Safe Florida Home Program;
- (h) Risk management strategies, particularly for
catastrophic risk; or
- (i) Health insurance, life insurance, workers'
compensation, motor vehicle insurance, or any other type of
insurance sold within this state.

(2) Collaborate with the Office of Insurance Regulation to
create a report analyzing the property insurance market in this
state, projecting the outlook for the property insurance market
over 1 year, 5 years, 10 years, and 20 years. The report must
include recommendations for improving the availability and
affordability of property insurance in this state and for
facilitating this state's preparedness for and responsiveness to
catastrophic events. The center shall work with the Office of
Insurance Regulation to produce the report. The office shall
cooperate with the center in providing data necessary to

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complete the report. The center shall publish the initial report
on or before January 1, 2026, and update the report at least
once every 2 years. Coordinate and disseminate information
~~related to catastrophic storm risk management, including, but~~
~~not limited to, research and information that would benefit~~
~~businesses, consumers, and public policy makers. Areas of~~
~~interest may include storm forecasting, loss modeling, building~~
~~construction and mitigation, and risk management strategies.~~
~~Through its efforts, the center shall facilitate Florida's~~
~~preparedness for and responsiveness to catastrophic storms and~~
~~collaborate with other public and private institutions.~~

(3) Create and promote studies and opportunities that
 enhance the educational options available to risk management and
 insurance students.

(4) Develop a program in collaboration with the Office of
Insurance Regulation and the Actuarial Science Program of the
Department of Mathematics at Florida State University to
encourage actuarial science students to practice in the public
sector in the fields of risk management and insurance.

(5) Publish and disseminate findings.

~~(6)-(5)~~ Organize and sponsor conferences, symposia, and
 workshops to educate consumers and policymakers.

(7) Use the public hurricane loss projection model under s.
627.06281 when needed to meet the center's obligations under
this section.

(8) Conduct research responsive to joint or individual
inquiries from the President of the Senate and the Speaker of
the House of Representatives regarding insurance or risk
management. The center may also conduct research responsive to

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requests made by the Office of Insurance Regulation.

Section 2. Section 627.06281, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

627.06281 Public hurricane loss projection model; reporting of data by insurers.—

(1) The Office of Insurance Regulation shall contract with the Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management to manage the public hurricane loss projection model developed under this section. The center shall cooperate with other entities and universities, including Florida International University, to develop and maintain the public model. The center shall constantly evaluate and update the public model so that it will have the same functionalities as other models approved by the Florida Commission on Hurricane Loss Projection Methodology. The center may use the public model, including all assumptions and factors and all detailed loss results, for the purpose of meeting its obligations under s. 1004.647. Within 30 days after a written request for loss data and associated exposure data by the office or the center ~~Florida International University center established to study mitigation,~~ residential property insurers and licensed rating and advisory organizations that compile residential property insurance loss data shall provide loss data and associated exposure data for residential property insurance policies to the office or the ~~Florida International University center established to study mitigation,~~ as directed by the office, for the purposes of developing, maintaining, and updating ~~the a public model for hurricane loss projections.~~ The loss data and associated exposure data provided must ~~shall~~ be in writing.

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(2) The public model must be submitted to the Florida Commission on Hurricane Loss Projection Methodology for review under s. 627.0628 ~~by March 1, 2007.~~ The office may continue to use the public model for its review of rate filings pursuant to ss. 627.062 and 627.351 until such time as the Florida Commission on Hurricane Loss Projection Methodology determines that the public model is not accurate or reliable pursuant to the same process and standards as the commission uses for the review of other hurricane loss projection models.

(3) (a) A residential property insurer may have access to and use the public ~~hurricane loss projection~~ model, including all assumptions and factors and all detailed loss results, for the purpose of calculating rate indications in a rate filing and for analytical purposes, including any analysis or evaluation of the public model required under actuarial standards of practice.

(b) The fees charged for private sector access and use of the public model ~~must~~ shall be the reasonable costs associated with the operation and maintenance of the public model by the office. Such fees do not apply to access and use of the model by the office or the Florida Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk Management.

Section 3. All powers, duties, functions, records, offices, personnel, associated administrative support positions, property, pending issues, existing contracts, administrative authority, administrative rules, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, and any other funds relating to the public hurricane loss projection model are transferred by a type two transfer, as defined in s. 20.06(2), Florida Statutes, from Florida International University to Florida State University.

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175 Section 4. Subsection (3) of section 627.06292, Florida
 176 Statutes, is amended to read:
 177 627.06292 Reports of hurricane loss data and associated
 178 exposure data; public records exemption.—
 179 (3) Each year, on October 1, the Florida State
 180 ~~International~~ University center that develops, maintains, and
 181 updates the public model for hurricane loss projections shall
 182 publish a report summarizing loss data and associated exposure
 183 data collected from residential property insurers and licensed
 184 rating and advisory organizations. The Florida State
 185 ~~International~~ University center shall submit the report
 186 annually, on or before October 1, to the Governor, the President
 187 of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
 188 (a) Such report must include a summary of the data supplied
 189 by residential property insurers and licensed rating and
 190 advisory organizations from September 1 of the prior year to
 191 August 31 of the current year, and must include the following
 192 information:
 193 1. The total amount of insurance written by county.
 194 2. The number of property insurance policies by county.
 195 3. The number of property insurance policies by county and
 196 by construction type.
 197 4. The number of property insurance policies by county and
 198 by decade of construction.
 199 5. The number of property insurance policies by county and
 200 by deductible amount.
 201 6. The number of property insurance policies by county and
 202 by wind mitigation features when the information is supplied by
 203 the residential property insurer or licensed rating and advisory

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204 organization.
 205 7. The total amount of hurricane losses by county and by
 206 decade of construction.
 207 8. The total amount of hurricane losses by county and by
 208 deductible amount.
 209 9. The total amount of hurricane losses by county and by
 210 wind mitigation features when the information is supplied by the
 211 residential property insurer or licensed rating and advisory
 212 organization.
 213 (b) Separate compilations of the data obtained shall be
 214 presented in order to use the public model for calculating rate
 215 indications and to update, validate, or calibrate the public
 216 model. Additional detail and a description of the operation and
 217 maintenance of the public model may be included in the report.
 218 (c) The report may not contain any information that
 219 identifies a specific insurer or policyholder.
 220 Section 5. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$5
 221 million in recurring funds and the sum of \$1.5 million in
 222 nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund
 223 to Florida State University for the purpose of establishing and
 224 maintaining the Center for Excellence in Insurance and Risk
 225 Management.
 226 Section 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.

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The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education

BILL: SB 1624

INTRODUCER: Senator Calatayud

SUBJECT: Higher Education

DATE: March 21, 2025

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Jahnke	Bouck	HE	Favorable
2.	Gray	Elwell	AHE	Pre-meeting
3.			FP	

I. Summary:

SB 1624 modifies provisions related to higher education, workforce development, and regulation which focuses on tuition and fee policies, educational programs, workforce training, and institutional operations. Relating to:

- Tuition and fees, the bill:
 - Requires state universities to establish a market rate out-of-state-fee for “nonresident online students.”
 - Shifts a Florida College System institution allocation of financial aid fees to assist underrepresented students instead of targeted gender or ethnic minorities.
 - Provides tuition and fee waivers for active Florida State Guard members.
 - Repeals the out-of-state fee waiver for nonresident students with a Florida resident grandparent.
- The Office of Ocean Economy at Florida Atlantic University, the bill expands office duties to include collaboration with career centers and the College of the Florida Keys and with education and industry to strengthen Florida’s maritime industry, and requires a catalog of ocean economy programs, credentialing opportunities, and training providers.
- The Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program, the bill authorizes partnerships with online providers, modifies the age limit, removes a simultaneous enrollment requirement for secondary and career education, and expands uses of the GATE Startup Fund to support marketing and outreach efforts.
- Higher education governance and institutional changes, the bill:
 - Renames Hillsborough Community College to Hillsborough State College.
 - Removes the Board of Governors requirement to provide electronic access to degree job placement and earnings rankings.
 - Expands preeminent state research university eligibility by adding the Classical Learning Test (CLT) as an alternative to the SAT and ACT.
 - Eliminates reporting requirements on student open access resources and the performance of the annual host entity.

This bill does have a fiscal impact on revenues and expenditures for State Government and institutions. **See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

II. Present Situation:

The present situation for the relevant portions of the bill is discussed under the Effect of Proposed Changes of this bill analysis.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability

Present Situation

The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) is a research arm of the Florida Legislature. The OPPAGA was created by the Legislature in 1994 to help improve the performance and accountability of state government. The OPPAGA provides data, evaluative research, and objective analyses to assist legislative budget and policy deliberations. The OPPAGA conducts research as directed by state law, the presiding officers, or the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee.¹

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 11.52, F.S., by authorizing the OPPAGA to develop contracts or agreements with State University System institutions to utilize the expertise of state university faculty and research staff to provide assistance in analysis and evaluative research.

Postsecondary Tuition and Fees

Present Situation

Residency Status for Tuition Purposes

Students must be classified as residents or nonresidents for the purpose of assessing tuition in postsecondary educational programs offered by public postsecondary institutions. Students pay differing tuition rates based on their status as a resident or nonresident of Florida.²

To qualify as a resident for tuition purposes, a person, or if that person is a dependent child, his or her parent or parents, must have established legal residence in Florida and must have maintained legal residence for at least 12 consecutive months immediately prior to his or her initial enrollment in the public postsecondary institution.³

Each public postsecondary institution must make a residency determination based on the submission of at least two forms of documentation specified in law. Documentation includes, but

¹ Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability, *About Us*, <https://oppaga.fl.gov/About> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

² Section 1009.21, F.S.

³ Section 1009.21(2), F.S. This section also specifies other circumstances that may classify a person as a resident for tuition purposes.

is not limited to, a Florida voter registration card, Florida driver's license, Florida vehicle registration, homestead exemption (which is a single, conclusive proof of residency), proof of full-time Florida employment, declaration of domicile, Florida incorporation, lease agreements, or utility bills.⁴

Tuition and Out-of-State Fees

Florida law defines "tuition" as the basic fee charged to a student for instruction provided by a public postsecondary educational institution in the state. A student who is classified as a resident for tuition purposes qualifies for the in-state tuition rate. An out-of-state fee is the additional fee for instruction charged to a student who does not qualify for the in-state tuition rate,⁵ unless these costs are exempted or waived.⁶

The resident undergraduate tuition rate for the State University System (SUS) is set at \$105.07 per credit hour.⁷ The SUS average tuition and out-of-state fee is \$570.01 per credit hour.⁸

The BOG may establish tuition for graduate and professional programs and out-of-state fees for all programs for state universities. Except as otherwise provided, the sum of tuition and out-of-state fees assessed to nonresident students must be sufficient to offset the full instructional cost of serving such students. However, adjustments to out-of-state fees or tuition for graduate programs and professional programs may not exceed 15 percent in any year.⁹

The Florida College System (FCS) tuition rate for college credit courses is \$71.98 per credit hour, and the out-of-state fee is \$215.94 per credit hour. Baccalaureate degree program resident tuition is \$91.79 per credit hour, and the total tuition and out-of-state fee may not exceed 85 percent of the tuition and out-of-state fee of the nearest state university.¹⁰ If a career center offers college credit courses as a part of a career associate degree program, the standard tuition is also \$71.98 per credit hour, and the out-of-state fee is \$215.94 per credit hour.¹¹

For non-college-credit career programs at career centers and FCS institutions, the standard tuition is \$2.33 per contact hour, and the out-of-state fee is \$6.99 per contact hour. Each district school board or FCS institution board of trustees may adopt tuition and out-of-state fees that vary no more than five percent below or five percent above such fees.¹²

⁴ Section 1009.21(3), F.S.

⁵ Section 1009.01, F.S.

⁶ Section 1009.24(2), F.S.

⁷ Section 1009.24(4), F.S.

⁸ Florida Board of Governors, *State University System of Florida, Tuition and Required Fees, 2024-25* at 4, <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-2025-SUS-Tuition-and-Fees-Report-FINAL.pdf> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025)

⁹ Section 1009.24(4), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 1009.23(3), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1009.22(4), F.S.

¹² Section 1009.22(3), F.S.

Additional Student Fees

Each FCS and SUS institution is authorized to charge additional student fees. Such fees may include activity, service, athletics, financial aid, technology, capital improvements, and other user fees and fines.¹³

Specifically, each FCS institution's board of trustees is authorized to establish a separate fee for financial aid purposes in an additional amount up to, but not to exceed, five percent of the total student tuition or out-of-state fees collected. Up to 25 percent or \$600,000, whichever is greater, of the financial aid fees collected may be used to assist students who demonstrate academic merit; who participate in athletics, public service, cultural arts, and other extracurricular programs as determined by the institution; or who are identified as members of a targeted gender or ethnic minority population.¹⁴

Tuition and Fee Waivers

To support access to higher education, school districts, each FCS institution and state university is authorized to provide a variety of tuition and fee waivers for eligible students. These waivers support individuals based on employment, military service, financial need, and other specific circumstances.¹⁵ These waivers include, but are not limited to, the following:

- University Employees – Waiver for full-time employees of a state university for up to six credit hours per term on a space-available basis.
- Classroom Teachers – Waiver for full-time classroom teachers to enroll in up to six credit hours per term in undergraduate courses related to special education, mathematics, or science.
- Graduate Students in School Psychology Programs – Waiver for internship credit hours for graduate students completing internships in public schools under the supervision of a certified school psychologist.
- Dependents of Deceased First Responders – Waiver for spouses and children of first responders who died in the line of duty.
- Active-Duty Military Members – Waiver of out-of-state fees for active-duty service members residing or stationed outside Florida.
- Grandparent Waiver – Waiver of out-of-state fees for students with a grandparent who is a Florida resident, provided the student achieves an SAT combined score no lower than the 89th national percentile or the concordant score on the ACT or Classic Learning Test (CLT), and enrolls full-time in an undergraduate program.¹⁶

Additionally, FCS and SUS institutions are authorized to waive tuition and fees for full-time state employees. Eligible employees may enroll in up to six credit hours per term on a space-available basis, promoting professional development opportunities for state personnel.¹⁷

¹³ Sections 1009.23 and 1009.24, F.S.

¹⁴ Section 1009.23(8), F.S.

¹⁵ See Sections 1009.25, 1009.26, and 1009.265, F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1009.26, F.S.

¹⁷ Section 1009.265, F.S.

Effect of Proposed Changes

Residency Status for Tuition Purposes

The bill modifies s. 1009.21, F.S., by defining a “nonresident online student” as a person who is admitted to a Florida College System institution or state university as an online student and does not qualify for in-state tuition or fee rates.

Student Fees

The bill modifies s. 1009.23, F.S., by authorizing an FCS institution to allocate a portion of financial aid fees to assist underrepresented students rather than students who are members of a targeted gender or ethnic minority.

The bill also amends s. 1009.24, F.S., by requiring the out-of-state fee for nonresident online students to be based on market rates and must exceed the university’s current out-of-state fee.

Tuition and Fee Waivers

The bill amends s. 251.001, F.S., by providing tuition and fee waivers for active members of the Florida State Guard to enroll in a state university or Florida College System institution for up to six credit hours of courses per term on a space-available basis. This waiver is similar to the existing tuition and fee waiver available to state employees.

The bill amends s. 1009.26, F.S., by repealing the out-of-state fee waiver for nonresident students with a grandparent who is a Florida resident.

The Office of Ocean Economy

Present Situation

The maritime industry encompasses a wide range of interrelated activities such as shipping, shipbuilding, port operations, maritime logistics, fishing and aquaculture, offshore energy, and marine services. The maritime industry facilitates the movement of goods, connects markets, supports industries, and plays a vital role in sustainable development.

The U.S. marine economy plays a significant role in the national economy, contributing \$432 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) and supporting 2.3 million jobs across various industries. In 2021, the sector generated \$730 billion in sales, reflecting a 10.5 percent increase and demonstrating its substantial economic impact. Notably, the tourism and recreation sector experienced 27.3% growth (\$49.8 billion), underscoring the marine economy’s vital role in driving business activity, sustaining employment, and supporting overall economic stability.¹⁸

Florida’s marine economy plays a vital role in the state’s economic landscape, supporting numerous businesses, jobs, and wages. As of the most recent data:

- There are 24,588 marine-related businesses operating in the state, contributing to economic activity across various sectors.

¹⁸ Office of Coastal Management, Fast Facts, *Marine Economy*, <https://coast.noaa.gov/states/fast-facts/marine-economy.html> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

- The industry employs 546,866 workers, reflecting its significant impact on Florida's job market.
- These jobs provide a total of \$20.6 billion in wages, supporting livelihoods across the coastal and marine sectors.
- Florida's marine economy contributes \$39.9 billion to the state's GDP, demonstrating its importance in driving statewide economic growth.¹⁹

The Office of Ocean Economy (office) is created within the State University System and housed at Florida Atlantic University (FAU). The office is created to connect the state's ocean and coastal resources to economic development strategies that grow, enhance, or contribute to the ocean economy.²⁰

The duties of the office are to advance research, innovation, industry recruitment, funding, and workforce training to grow the ocean economy. The office is intended to foster collaboration among universities, colleges, and industry partners while maintaining an online inventory of research and resources. The office identifies economic challenges, supports commercialization, removes regulatory barriers, and expands financial opportunities. It also tracks job growth, wages, and business development while promoting Florida's role in the global ocean economy. Additionally, the office educates state and local entities on aligning economic growth with environmental sustainability.²¹

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 288.036, F.S., by revising the duties of the Office of Ocean Economy at FAU. The bill expands the collaboration and coordination between the office and institutions. Specifically, the bill:

- Shifts from fostering relationships to actively collaborating and coordinating with institutions.
- Expands the scope of collaboration to include career centers and specifies collaboration with the College of the Florida Keys.

The bill adds "strengthening the workforce" as an explicit goal in identifying economic challenges and solutions within the ocean economy. This may broaden the office's role in addressing labor market demands alongside innovation, commercialization, and financial growth.

Additionally, the bill expands the office's online reporting requirements by requiring an inventory of programs related to the ocean economy, an evaluation of additional credentialing opportunities, and a list of institutions or training providers offering these credentials.

The bill requires the office to collaborate with public and private educational and industry organizations to make recommendations in:

- Strengthening employment opportunities in specific maritime sectors, including commercial fishing, fisheries and aquaculture, shipbuilding, and shipping.

¹⁹ NOAA, 2024 *Marine Economy Report: Florida* (2021), available at <https://coast.noaa.gov/data/digitalcoast/pdf/marine-economy-florida.pdf>.

²⁰ Section 288.036(2), F.S.

²¹ Section 288.036(3), F.S.

- Expanding maritime education programs and launching a public awareness campaign.
- Increasing access to dual enrollment, preapprenticeship, apprenticeship, and work-study programs in both public and private institutions.
- Aligning regulatory frameworks for fishing and boat operations with workforce demand through coordination with the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Furthermore, the bill clarifies that the office must provide a detailed report on the economic benefits of its activities, and beginning August 1, 2026, the report must include recommendations related to workforce expansion and regulatory alignment.

Florida Center for Brain Tumor Research

Present Situation

In July 2006, the Florida legislature established the Florida Center for Brain Tumor Research (FCBTR), within the Evelyn F. and William L. McKnight Brain Institute of the University of Florida, in a coordinated effort among the state's public and private universities and hospitals and the biomedical industry to discover cures for brain tumor and develop brain tumor treatment modalities.²²

The FCBTR serves as a collaborative, statewide resource, maintaining a biorepository of cancerous and non-cancerous brain tumor specimens, along with matched samples of DNA, plasma, serum, and cerebrospinal fluid. These samples are collected from patients who provide informed consent at various healthcare institutions across Florida. Professional research coordinators and tissue acquisition specialists facilitate the collection process, ensuring that valuable specimens and data are available for future research. The bank distributes materials to researchers both within Florida and beyond, supporting investigations into improved treatments and potential cures for brain tumors.²³

In addition to its biorepository functions, the FCBTR has awarded pilot funding to researchers throughout the state. This funding has led to the development of novel therapies currently being tested in clinical trials and has resulted in significant extramural funding and meaningful collaborations between public and private institutions in Florida.²⁴

The FCBTR operates under the guidance of a scientific advisory council, which includes biomedical researchers, physicians, clinicians, and representatives from public and private universities and hospitals. The council members are appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, President of the Senate, and State Surgeon General. These members serve staggered 4-year terms and without compensation. The council meets at least annually to provide oversight and strategic direction.²⁵

²² Section 381.853, F.S.

²³ Florida Center for Brain Tumor Research, College of Medicine, University of Florida, *About Us*, <https://fcbtr.ufl.edu/about-us/> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

²⁴ Florida Center for Brain Tumor Research, College of Medicine, University of Florida, *About Us*, <https://fcbtr.ufl.edu/about-us/> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

²⁵ Section 381.853(4), F.S.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 381.853, F.S., to shift the appointment authority to the President of the University of Florida, in consultation with the dean of the University of Florida College of Medicine, to appoint the advisory council members for the Florida Center for Brain Tumor Research.

Assistive Technology Advisory Council***Present Situation***

The Assistive Technology Advisory Council was established to ensure consumer involvement in the development, application, and distribution of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities. The council plays a critical role in statewide policy development, legislative advocacy, and the oversight of assistive technology programs to enhance accessibility and service delivery. Its responsibilities include reviewing consumer responsiveness, evaluating program effectiveness, and advising on resource allocation to improve assistive technology access across Florida.²⁶

The council is composed of members representing a diverse range of stakeholders, including individuals with disabilities, their family members, consumer advocacy organizations, business and industry representatives, and various state agencies involved in disability services. A majority of its members must be individuals with disabilities who are assistive technology consumers or their family members. Membership is also required to be geographically representative of the state and reflect diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, age, and disability type. Members are appointed by the Commissioner of Education and serve terms of up to three years, with a limit of two consecutive terms. A member who has served two terms may be reappointed after a three-year break, ensuring opportunities for new voices while maintaining institutional knowledge.²⁷

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 413.407, F.S., by removing diversity, race, ethnicity, gender, and age from the requirement that the Assistive Technology Advisory Council members be representative of the state's population. The bill also increases the term limit of council members from three to five years.

Apprenticeship Training Programs***Present Situation***

Apprenticeship training provides educational opportunities for individuals to develop skills for trades, occupations, and professions that align with their abilities. These programs promote hands-on training in occupations requiring physical manipulative skills by expanding job training opportunities and strengthening coordination between academic programs, career programs, and registered apprenticeships. By combining on-the-job training with related classroom instruction,

²⁶ Section 413.407, F.S.

²⁷ Section 413.407(1), F.S.

apprenticeship programs help individuals gain practical experience while enhancing their knowledge and expertise.

Efforts to support apprenticeship training include establishing preapprenticeship programs within the public school system, expanding existing registered programs, and developing new programs in occupations that are well-suited for apprenticeship. Oversight of these programs ensures the adoption of uniform minimum standards, assists educational institutions in developing preapprenticeship opportunities, and upholds the quality of training through program promotion, registration, monitoring, and enforcement of standards.²⁸

The established uniform minimum standards and policies governing apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs ensure training providers submit necessary performance data while maintaining quality training standards. These standards regulate apprentice employment and training conditions, including ratios of apprentices to journeymen, safety measures, related instruction, and on-the-job training. An annual report is published by September 1 detailing registered programs, expenditures, program completion rates, wage progression, and public engagement efforts. It also assists district school boards, Florida College System institutions, program sponsors, and workforce development boards in promoting apprenticeship opportunities to students, parents, and the community.²⁹

Apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs must meet established standards to be registered and maintained, ensuring compliance through monitoring and investigation of complaints. Programs that fail to adhere to standards or refuse to cooperate with oversight efforts may have their registration canceled. The development and expansion of apprenticeship opportunities are supported through outreach initiatives, including efforts to educate veterans on career pathways. Local apprenticeship sponsors receive assistance in developing training standards, and registered programs are encouraged to grant credit to individuals who have completed preapprenticeship programs. Apprenticeship programs must operate in compliance with all applicable standards, with minority and gender diversity considered in their administration.³⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 446.032, F.S., by changing the required publishing date of the annual report on apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs from September 1 to November 30.

The bill amends s. 446.041, F.S., by removing the term “minority and gender diversity” and replacing it with “underrepresented groups” to be considered in the administration of apprenticeship and preapprenticeship training programs.

²⁸ Section 446.011, F.S.

²⁹ Section 446.032, F.S.

³⁰ Section 446.041, F.S.

Florida Educational Equity Act

Present Situation

The Florida Educational Equity Act³¹ (FEEA) requires equal access to, and prohibits discrimination against, any student or employee of the state's K-20 public education system on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, disability, religion, or marital status. No individual may, on such bases, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any public K-20 education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices, conducted by a public educational institution that receives or benefits from federal or state financial assistance.³² Additionally, the prohibition on discrimination extends to participation in any interscholastic, intercollegiate, club, or intermural athletics offered by a public K-20 educational institution, and no K-20 education institution may provide athletics separately on such basis, except as provided by law.³³ Further, the FEEA expressly requires that any discrimination motivated by anti-Semitic³⁴ intent be treated in an identical manner to discrimination motivated by race.³⁵

Public schools and Florida College System (FCS) institutions must develop and implement strategies to increase participation among students of a particular race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or marital status in programs where they have been traditionally underrepresented. These efforts apply to fields such as mathematics, science, computer technology, electronics, communications technology, engineering, and career education to promote greater diversity and inclusion.³⁶

The FEEA is implemented by the Board of Governors through regulations³⁷ and rules adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).³⁸ Additionally, the Office of Equal Educational Opportunity (OEEO), within the Department of Education (DOE), serves implementation functions including, but not limited to, the following:

- Requiring all district school boards and FCS institution boards of trustees to develop and submit plans for the implementation of the FEEA to the DOE.
- Requiring all district school boards and Florida College System institution boards of trustees to submit data and information necessary to determine compliance with the FEEA.

³¹ Section 1000.05(1), F.S.

³² Section 1000.05(2)(a), F.S. Students may be separated for permissible single gender programs, for portions of a class that deals with human reproduction, or during participation in bodily contact sports. Section 1000.05(2)(d), F.S. All K-20 public education classes and guidance services must be made available to students without regard to any of the bases described above. Section 1000.05(2)(c) and (e), F.S.

³³ Section. 1000.05(3)(a), F.S. Public K-20 educational institutions are authorized to maintain separate teams for members of each gender or based on ability in certain circumstances. Section. 1000.05(3)(b)-(c), F.S. It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors and the Commissioner of Education to determine whether equal athletic opportunities are provided for both genders at state universities and in school districts and Florida College Systems, respectively. Section 1000.05(3)(d), F.S.

³⁴ For purposes of this section, the term "anti-Semitism" includes a certain perception of the Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jewish people, rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism directed toward a person, his or her property, or toward Jewish community institutions or religious facilities. Section 1005.05(8), F.S. The FEEA also lists examples of anti-Semitism. Section 1000.05(7)(a)-(b), F.S.

³⁵ Section 1000.05(8), F.S.

³⁶ Section 1000.05(5), F.S.

³⁷ Board of Governors Regulation 2.003.

³⁸ Rule 6A-19.010, F.A.C.

- Developing and implementing enforcement mechanisms with appropriate penalties to ensure that public K-12 schools and Florida College System institutions comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the FEEA.
- Reporting to the Commissioner of Education any district school board or FCS institution board of trustees found to be out of compliance with the FEEA or the rules implementing the FEEA.³⁹

The SBE is responsible for ensuring compliance with its rules by district school boards and FCS institution boards of trustees. If a board is found to be out of compliance, the Commissioner of Education must report the violation, and the SBE may impose penalties, including declaring the institution ineligible for competitive state grants and directing the Chief Financial Officer to withhold general revenue funds until compliance is achieved. The institution remains ineligible for funding until it meets compliance requirements or the SBE approves a corrective plan.⁴⁰

The FEEA provides a cause of action for anyone aggrieved by a violation of the FEEA. Such an individual is authorized to seek equitable relief and, should he or she prevail, he or she may be awarded reasonable attorney fees and court costs.⁴¹

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1000.05, F.S., by renaming the “Florida Educational Equity Act” to the “Florida Educational Equality Act”. The bill changes the term “gender” to “sex” and removes the term “particular race, color, national origin, sex, disability or marital status” and replaces it with “underrepresented.”

Additionally, the bill removes the specific reporting duty of the OEEA and the penalties for non-compliance in favor of requiring the Commissioner of Education and State Board of Education to utilize their enforcement authority already specified in law.

Hillsborough Community College

Present Situation

Hillsborough Community College (HCC) opened in 1968 as “Hillsborough Junior College.” In 1970, the college’s name was changed to Hillsborough Community College to better reflect its community orientation and involvement.⁴² HCC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS) to award associate and baccalaureate degrees.⁴³ HCC offers a baccalaureate degree in nursing.

³⁹ Section 1000.05(6), F.S.

⁴⁰ Section 1000.05, F.S.

⁴¹ S. 1000.05(9), F.S.

⁴² Hillsborough Community College, About Us, *History*, <https://news.hccfl.edu/about-us/history/default.aspx> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

⁴³ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges, *Hillsborough Community College*, https://sacscoc.org/institutions/?institution_name=hillsborough+community+college&results_per_page=25&curpage=1 (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

Florida College System Institution Name Change

With the approval of its board of trustees, a Florida College System (FCS) institution may change the institution's name and use the designation "college" or "state college" if it has been authorized by the SBE to grant baccalaureate degrees and has been accredited as a baccalaureate-degree-granting institution by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDOE).⁴⁴

With the approval of its board of trustees, an FCS institution that either has not been authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees or has not been accredited as a baccalaureate-degree-granting institution by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the USDOE may request approval from the SBE to change the institution's name and use the designation "college." The SBE may approve the request if the FCS institution enters into an agreement with the SBE to do the following:

- Maintain as its primary mission responsibility for responding to community needs for postsecondary academic education and career degree education.
- Maintain an open-door admissions policy for associate-level degree programs and workforce education programs.
- Continue to provide outreach to underserved populations.
- Continue to provide remedial education.
- Comply with all provisions of the statewide articulation agreement that relate to 2-year and 4-year public degree-granting institutions as adopted by the SBE.⁴⁵

A district board of trustees that approves a change to the name of an institution must seek statutory codification of such name change during the next regular legislative session.⁴⁶

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1000.21, F.S., to change the name of "Hillsborough Community College" to "Hillsborough State College".

Board of Governors

Present Situation

The State University System (SUS) is composed of 12 public universities,⁴⁷ each administered by a board of trustees. The Board of Governors (BOG) is responsible for operating, regulating, and managing the entire SUS.⁴⁸ It also ensures compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws governing the institutions under its jurisdiction.⁴⁹

Additionally, the BOG oversees cost-effective policy decisions at each constituent university, ensuring alignment with institutional missions, the maintenance of high-quality education

⁴⁴ Section 1001.60(2)(b)1., F.S.

⁴⁵ Section 1001.60(2)(b)2., F.S.

⁴⁶ Section 1001.60(2)(c), F.S.

⁴⁷ See State University System of Florida, *Universities*, <https://www.flbog.edu/universities/> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025) (identifying 12 state universities).

⁴⁸ FLA. CONST., art. IX, s. 7(a)-(d).

⁴⁹ Section 1001.705(2), F.S.

programs, performance measurement, data reporting, and input on state policy, budgeting, and education standards.⁵⁰ To fulfill these responsibilities, the BOG carries out key functions, including:

- Developing strategic and accountability plans with performance metrics for universities.
- Requiring universities to provide students with employment and earnings data for degree programs.⁵¹
- Maintaining an information system to track and report institutional performance.
- Investigating allegations of waste, fraud, or financial mismanagement at state universities.
- Authorizing regulatory flexibilities and waivers to support institutional priorities.
- Monitoring and improving four-year graduation rates through institutional proposals.
- Matching student data with state and federal employment records to assess program effectiveness.⁵²

MyFloridaFuture is a free online tool, developed by the SUS, that helps students, parents, and policymakers make more informed decisions about college and career planning. This interactive tool allows users to explore data related to graduate salary, employment, and student debt by institution or major at both the statewide and individual institution levels.⁵³

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 1001.706, F.S., by removing the requirement for the Board of Governors to provide electronic access to data on the top 25 percent of degrees with the highest job placement and earnings and the bottom 10 percent of degrees with the lowest job placement and earnings before registration.

Preeminent State Research Universities Program

Present Situation

The preeminent state research universities program is a collaborative partnership between the Board of Governors (BOG) and the Legislature to raise the academic and research preeminence of the highest performing state research universities in Florida.⁵⁴ A state university that meets 12 of the 13 academic and research excellent standards specified in law is designated a “preeminent state research university.”⁵⁵ Currently, the University of Florida, Florida State University, University of South Florida, and Florida International University are designated as preeminent state research universities.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Section 1001.706, F.S.

⁵¹ See Section 1008.39, F.S. The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is a data collection and consumer reporting system that provides employment and education follow-up data on former students and program participants who have graduated, exited, or completed a public education or training program within the State of Florida.

⁵² Section 1001.706(5), F.S.

⁵³ Florida Board of Governors, *MyFloridaFuture*, <https://www.flbog.edu/myfloridafuture/> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

⁵⁴ Section 1001.7065(1), F.S.

⁵⁵ Section 1001.7065(3), F.S.

⁵⁶ Board of Governors, State University System of Florida, *Accountability Propels State University System of Florida to New Heights*, <https://www.flbog.edu/2024/07/01/accountability-propels-state-university-system-of-florida-to-new-heights/> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

The following are the academic and research excellence standards established for the preeminent state research universities program and must be reported annually in the BOG Accountability Plan:

- An average weighted grade point average (GPA) of 4.0 or higher and an average SAT score of 1200 or higher or an average ACT score of 25 or higher for fall semester incoming freshmen.
- A top-50 ranking on at least two well-known national public university rankings, such as U.S. News & World Report.
- A 90% or higher freshman retention rate for full-time, first-time-in-college students.
- A 60% or higher four-year graduation rate for full-time, first-time-in-college students.
- At least six faculty members who are members of a national academy.
- Total annual research expenditures of \$200 million or more, including federal research funding.
- Annual research expenditures in diversified nonmedical sciences of \$150 million or more.
- A top-100 national ranking for research expenditures in five or more STEM fields.
- At least 100 patents awarded by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office over the most recent three-year period.
- 400 or more doctoral degrees awarded annually, including professional doctoral degrees in medical and health care disciplines.
- 200 or more postdoctoral appointees annually.
- An endowment of \$500 million or more.
- Total annual STEM-related research expenditures of \$50 million or more, including federal research funding.⁵⁷

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1001.7065, F.S., by expanding the standardized test options used to meet the academic and research excellence standards for the preeminent state research universities program. It adds the Classical Learning Test (CLT) as an alternative to the SAT and ACT, requiring an average CLT score of 83 or higher on a 120-point scale for incoming freshmen.

Emergency Opioid Antagonists

Present Situation

Each Florida College System institution and state university must maintain a supply of emergency opioid antagonists,⁵⁸ such as naloxone hydrochloride or any similarly acting drug approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA), in every residence hall or dormitory it owns or operates. These emergency opioid antagonists must be placed in clearly marked locations within each residence hall or dormitory and must be easily accessible to campus law enforcement officers trained in their administration. Public and private partnerships

⁵⁷ Section 1001.7065(2), F.S.

⁵⁸ Section 1004.0971(1)(b), F.S., defines an “emergency opioid antagonist” as naloxone hydrochloride or any similarly acting drug that blocks the effects of opioids administered from outside the body and that is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of an opioid overdose.

are encouraged to cover the costs associated with purchasing and placing these emergency opioid antagonists.⁵⁹

Campus law enforcement officers who are trained and administer or attempt to administer an emergency opioid antagonist in compliance with applicable laws, as well as the institution that employs such officers, are immune from civil or criminal liability.⁶⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1004.0971, F.S., by removing the specific reference to “naloxone hydrochloride or any similarly acting” drug and instead broadly defining an emergency opioid antagonist as any FDA-approved drug that blocks the effects of opioids and is used for opioid overdose treatment.

Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education Program

Present Situation

Created within the Department of Education, the Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program offers a unique opportunity for students who have left high school to get back on track. Designed for students aged 16 to 21, GATE provides a pathway to earn valuable career education credentials while also completing a standard high school diploma or its equivalent.⁶¹

Through the GATE program, students can enroll in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program and an Adult Secondary Education (ASE) program simultaneously. Eligible ASE programs include Adult High School or GED® Preparation. Participants will work towards earning both a high school diploma and a credential from a Career Education Program on the Master Credential list in their chosen career field. Students have up to three years to complete the GATE Program.⁶²

To be eligible for participation in the GATE Program, a student must:

- Not have earned a standard high school diploma or a high school equivalency diploma before enrolling in the GATE Program;
- Have been withdrawn from high school;
- Be a resident of the state for tuition purposes;
- Be 16 to 21 years of age at the time of initial enrollment, and if 16 or 17 years of age, have withdrawn from school enrollment pursuant to certain requirements and safeguards;⁶³
- Select the adult secondary education program and career education program of his or her choice at the time of admission to the GATE Program, provided that the career education program is included on the Master Credentials List. The student must remain in their chosen

⁵⁹ Section 1004.0971, F.S.

⁶⁰ Section 1004.0971(5), F.S.

⁶¹ Section 1004.933, F.S. and Florida Department of Education, Adult Education, *Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program*, <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/gate.shtml> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

⁶² Florida Department of Education, Adult Education, *Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program*, <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/gate.shtml> (last visited Mar. 4, 2025).

⁶³ Section. 1003.21(1), F.S.

pathway after enrollment, except that, if necessary, the student may enroll in an adult basic education program prior to enrolling in the adult secondary education program;

- Maintain a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) for career and technical education coursework; and
- Complete the adult secondary education program and the career education program within three years unless the institution determines that an extension is warranted due to extenuating circumstances.⁶⁴

GATE Startup Grant Program

The GATE Startup Grant Program is established within the Department of Education (department) to fund and support the startup and implementation of the GATE Program. The purpose of the grant program is to increase access to programs that support adult learners earning a high school credential, either a high school diploma or its equivalent, and a workforce credential aligned to statewide or regional demand. The department is required to administer the grants, determine eligibility, and distribute grant awards.⁶⁵

Applicants eligible to apply for the GATE Startup Grant Program must meet the definition of an “institution”⁶⁶ and must be located in or serve a rural area of opportunity as designated by the Governor. Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO) are areas designated by the Governor that have been adversely affected by an extraordinary economic event, severe or chronic distress, or a natural disaster.⁶⁷

Florida’s designated RAOs are:

- Northwest Rural Area of Opportunity: Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Wakulla, and Washington Counties, and the area within the city limits of Freeport and Walton County north of the Choctawhatchee Bay and intercostal waterway.
- South Central Rural Area of Opportunity: DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties, and the cities of Pahokee, Belle Glade, and South Bay (Palm Beach County) and Immokalee (Collier County).
- North Central Rural Area of Opportunity: Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor and Union.⁶⁸

Grant funds may be used for planning activities and other expenses associated with the creation of the GATE Program, such as expenses related to program instruction, instructional equipment, supplies, instructional personnel, and student services. Grant funds may not be used for indirect costs. Grant recipients must submit an annual report in a format prescribed by the department.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Section 1004.933(4), F.S.

⁶⁵ Section 1011.804, F.S.

⁶⁶ Section 1011.804(2), F.S. The term “institution” means a school district career center established under s. 1001.44, a charter technical career center established under s. 1002.34, or a Florida College System institution identified in s. 1000.21 which offers the GATE Program pursuant to s. 1004.933.

⁶⁷ Section 288.0656(d), F.S.

⁶⁸ Department of Education, *Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program*, <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/gate.shtml> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

⁶⁹ Section 1011.804(6), F.S.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1004.933, F.S., by authorizing an institution to enter into an agreement with an online provider for the adult education or career instruction portion of the GATE Program, provided the provider's instructional content and services align with the state career and adult education curriculum frameworks.

The bill also modifies the age requirement at initial enrollment, changing it from "16 to 21" to "at least 16" years old. Additionally, it clarifies that students are not required to enroll in adult secondary and career education program coursework simultaneously with the GATE Program but maintains the three-year completion requirement.

The bill amends s. 1011.804, F.S., by expanding the authorized use of the GATE Startup Fund. Specifically, it authorizes institutions with existing GATE Programs located in or serving a RAO to apply for grant funds exclusively for marketing and outreach efforts to increase student participation. Additionally, all grant recipients are authorized to use funds for these purposes.

Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network

Present Situation

The Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network (Network) is administered by the Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC), which operates under the Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC), an affiliate of Florida State University.⁷⁰ The Network provides academic support services to Florida College System (FCS) institutions and state universities, including access to distance learning courses, coordination of online academic resources, and administration of a shared library automation system. Additionally, it negotiates statewide licensing agreements for electronic library resources and promotes the use of low-cost and open-access educational materials to reduce textbook costs for students.⁷¹

The Student Open Access Resources Repository is a statewide searchable database of open educational resources curated by faculty members from FCS institutions and state universities. It is designed to expand access to free and low-cost instructional materials and support the development of faculty-created content. The repository is based on the statewide course numbering system and aims to accelerate textbook affordability. Institutions receiving grant funds for open educational resources must openly license and share materials developed using these funds by adding them to the repository.⁷²

The Network is administered by a host entity responsible for delivering statewide academic support services. This host entity must submit an annual report by December 31 to the Chancellors of the State University System and Florida College System. The report includes data on the usage of open educational resources, the number and types of courses in the repository, and grant fund distributions. Additionally, the Chancellors must submit an annual performance

⁷⁰ Florida Virtual Campus, About FLVC Library Services, [https://libraries.flvc.org/about-flvc-ls#:~:text=Funded%20by%20the%20state%20as,\)%20\(Served%20only%20state%20universities\)](https://libraries.flvc.org/about-flvc-ls#:~:text=Funded%20by%20the%20state%20as,)%20(Served%20only%20state%20universities)) (last visited Mar. 14, 2025).

⁷¹ Section 1006.73(1), F.S.

⁷² Section 1006.73(4), F.S.

report on the host entity's service delivery to the Governor, the Legislature, the Board of Governors, and the State Board of Education. The Board of Governors and the Department of Education are also required to include any necessary funding increases for these services in their legislative budget requests.⁷³

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1006.73, F.S., by removing certain reporting requirements related to the Student Open Access Resources Repository, which is no longer funded. Specifically, it eliminates the requirement to report the number and types of courses included in the repository and data on the utilization of the repository and open educational resources by FCS institutions and state universities.

The bill removes the requirement for the Chancellors of the SUS and the FCS to submit an annual performance report on the host entity's delivery of services. It also eliminates the requirement for the BOG and the DOE to include any necessary funding increases for these services in their annual legislative budget requests.

Additionally, the bill removes an obsolete provision that required the Commissioner of Education and the Chancellor of the BOG to submit a joint recommendation on expanding access to postsecondary distance learning, student support services, and library assets for school district career centers and charter technical career centers.

College Reach-Out Program

Present Situation

The College Reach-Out Program (CROP) was established in 1983 to motivate and prepare students in grades six–12 from low-income educationally disadvantaged backgrounds towards pursuing and successfully completing postsecondary education. Participants are students who otherwise would be unlikely to seek admission to a postsecondary institution without additional support and recruitment efforts.⁷⁴

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 1007.34, F.S., by replacing the term “minority” with “underrepresented” in references to the student population within the College Reach-Out Program.

Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement

Present Situation

The Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement was established to prepare, inspire, and connect students to postsecondary success and opportunity, with a particular focus on minority students and students who are underrepresented in

⁷³ Section 1006.73(5), F.S.

⁷⁴ Florida Department of Education, *College Reach-Out Program (CROP)* available at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/pre-collegiate/crop.stml> (last visited Mar. 14, 2025)

postsecondary education.⁷⁵

Each public high school, including alternative sites and centers of the Department of Juvenile Justice, must provide for the administration of the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) or the PreACT to all 10th-grade students. A written notice must be provided to parents, including the opportunity to exempt their child from taking the assessment.⁷⁶

The partnership is responsible for identifying students for participation in advanced courses, providing information to students and parents regarding available opportunities, and explaining enrollment procedures. This information must include details on the benefits of advanced coursework in preparing students for postsecondary education, increasing access to postsecondary opportunities, and qualifying for scholarships and financial aid.⁷⁷

The partnership must coordinate efforts to expand student access to advanced coursework, including working with school districts, the Florida Virtual School, and Florida College System (FCS) institutions and state universities to develop advanced courses and provide instructional support.⁷⁸ It must also provide assessment tools to evaluate student strengths and weaknesses related to success in advanced coursework.⁷⁹

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1007.35, F.S., by renaming the “Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement” to the “Florida Partnership for Underrepresented Student Achievement.” The bill removes the partnership’s specific focus on minority students, broadening its scope to all underrepresented student populations.

The bill also provides legislative intent recognizing the value of career pathways beyond traditional college access, including vocational and trade schools, and emphasizes the importance of incentivizing high school programs that prepare students for those career paths.

Additionally, the bill removes requirements for the partnership to:

- Provide teacher training, professional development, and instructional materials.
- Consider ways to incorporate FCS institutions into its mission of preparing all students for postsecondary success.
- Cooperate with the DOE to provide information on partnership activities, opportunities, and priorities.

The bill also makes conforming provisions to s. 1007.27, F.S., related to the Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement.

⁷⁵ Section 1007.35(4), F.S.

⁷⁶ Section 1007.35(5), F.S.

⁷⁷ Section 1007.35(6)(i), F.S.

⁷⁸ Section 1007.35(6)(g) and (l), F.S.

⁷⁹ Section 1007.35(6)(d), F.S.

Florida Gold Seal Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Scholars Award

Present Situation

The Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars Award, established within the Bright Futures Scholarship Program, supports students who complete industry certifications that articulate for postsecondary credit.⁸⁰

To qualify, students must earn at least five postsecondary credit hours through CAPE industry certifications and complete at least 30 volunteer hours or 100 hours of paid work.⁸¹ This scholarship provides funding for career-focused postsecondary programs, including technical degrees, applied technology diplomas, or career certificates, and may extend to bachelor's degree programs in specific articulated pathways.⁸²

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1009.536, F.S., by modifying the eligibility requirements for the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award. Specifically, the bill reduces the required minimum postsecondary credit hours earned through CAPE industry certifications from five to three and adds a requirement that students earn a minimum cumulative weighted grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 in all subjects required for high school graduation, excluding electives.

The bill also expands eligibility by allowing students who complete the GATE Program to apply for the award before or within three months of completion.

Prepping Institutions, Programs, Employers, and Learners through Incentives for Nursing Education (PIPELINE) Fund

Present Situation

The PIPELINE Fund is a performance-based funding initiative designed to reward public postsecondary nursing education programs for their excellence and effectiveness.⁸³ The fund provides allocations to eligible institutions, school district career centers, charter technical career centers, Florida College System institutions, and state universities,⁸⁴ based on two key performance metrics:

- Number of program completers; and
- First-time passage rate on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensing Examination (NCLEX).⁸⁵

Programs with first-time NCLEX passage rates above the national average receive additional rewards.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Section 1009.536, F.S.

⁸¹ Section 1009.536(2), F.S.

⁸² Section 1009.536(5), F.S.

⁸³ Section 1009.897, F.S.

⁸⁴ Section 1009.897(2), F.S.

⁸⁵ Section 1009.897(3), F.S.

⁸⁶ Section 1009.897(3)(b), F.S.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 1009.897, F.S., by specifying that funds under the PIPELINE Fund must be used for healthcare industry-related programs.

Contracting for Educational Facilities***Present Situation***

Governing boards overseeing educational facilities, including district school boards, Florida College System institution boards of trustees, and state university boards of trustees, must competitively bid construction, remodeling, renovation, demolition, or improvement projects and award contracts to the lowest responsible bidder once funds are available and project plans are approved.⁸⁷

Boards are authorized to allocate up to 10 percent of capital project funds exclusively for contracts with minority business enterprises, which are competitively bid only among qualifying businesses to address the effects of past discriminatory practices.⁸⁸ To ensure compliance and contractor qualifications, boards must also prequalify bidders and require that contractors hold the appropriate certificates or licenses before awarding any construction contract.⁸⁹ This statutory framework is designed to maintain fair competition, emergency flexibility, and equitable contracting practices while ensuring adherence to licensing and safety regulations.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1013.46, F.S., by removing the provision related to the option of setting aside 10 percent of allocated funds for construction contracts with minority business enterprises.

The bill is effective July 1, 2025.

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

⁸⁷ Section 1013.46(1)(a), F.S.

⁸⁸ Section 1013.46(1)(c), F.S.

⁸⁹ Section 1013.46(2), F.S.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Should the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability develop contracts with institutions in the State University System, it may result in a revenue increase for the institutions. However, it may result in a cost to the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Requiring state universities and Florida College System institutions to waive tuition and fees for active members of the Florida State Guard would result in a revenue loss for the institutions.

Repealing the grandparent out-of-state fee waiver has an indeterminate fiscal impact on institutions. It is unclear whether the students will choose to pay the out-of-state fees or withdraw from the school.

Hillsborough Community College may have costs associated with their name change, such as those related to signage, publication, documentation, advertising, and other related items.

There would be a fiscal impact on any institution participating in the Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education Program (GATE) Program that chooses to enter into an agreement with an online provider for the adult education or career instruction portion of the program. Eliminating the 21-year-old age cap would likely expand the number of GATE Program participants. However, this waiver is subject to the availability of funds.

The changes to the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award is indeterminate. It is assumed that reducing the required minimum postsecondary credit hours earned through CAPE would increase the number of eligible participants. The bill also adds provisions regarding minimum GPA requirements which could cause a cost neutral result. However,

there would be a negative fiscal impact on the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award by expanding it to GATE Program completers.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 11.51, 251.001, 288.036, 381.853, 413.407, 446.032, 446.041, 1000.05, 1000.21, 1001.706, 1001.7065, 1004.0971, 1004.933, 1006.73, 1007.34, 1007.35, 1009.21, 1009.23, 1009.24, 1009.26, 1009.536, 1009.897, 1011.804, 1013.46, and 1007.27.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.



707800

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

The Appropriations Committee on Higher Education (Calatayud)
recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Between lines 445 and 446
insert:

Section 10. Section 1001.68, Florida Statutes, is created
to read:

1001.68 Regional consortium service organizations.—In order
to create effectiveness and efficiency of small institutions in
the Florida College System which serve rural communities:

(1) Colleges with 5,000 or fewer full-time equivalent



707800

students may enter into cooperative agreements to form a regional consortium service organization. Each regional consortium service organization shall, at a minimum, provide three of the following services: grant procurement; institutional research and reporting; risk management; professional development for faculty and staff; leadership support; information technology and cybersecurity training; faculty and staff recruitment; workforce development programs; cooperative purchasing; administrative services; or enrollment management services.

(2) Each regional consortium service organization must be governed by a board of directors composed of the presidents of the respective member colleges.

===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete line 36

and insert:

as "Hillsborough State College"; creating s. 1001.68, F.S.; authorizing Florida College System institutions with a certain number of full-time equivalent students to enter into cooperative agreements to form a regional consortium service organization; requiring such organizations to provide at least a specified number of certain services; requiring that regional consortium service organizations be governed by a board of directors consisting of specified members; amending s. 1001.706,



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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

The Appropriations Committee on Higher Education (Calatayud)
recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 741 - 858

and insert:

Section 17. Paragraph (c) of subsection (8) of section
1009.23, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.23 Florida College System institution student fees.—

(8)(c) Up to 25 percent or \$600,000, whichever is greater,
of the financial aid fees collected may be used to assist
students who demonstrate academic merit; who participate in



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athletics, public service, cultural arts, and other extracurricular programs as determined by the institution; or who are identified as members of an underrepresented ~~a targeted gender or ethnic minority~~ population. The financial aid fee revenues allocated for athletic scholarships and any fee exemptions provided to athletes pursuant to s. 1009.25(2) must be distributed equitably as required by s. 1000.05(3)(d). A minimum of 75 percent of the balance of these funds for new awards shall be used to provide financial aid based on absolute need, and the remainder of the funds shall be used for academic merit purposes and other purposes approved by the boards of trustees. Such other purposes shall include the payment of child care fees for students with financial need. The State Board of Education shall develop criteria for making financial aid awards. Each college shall report annually to the Department of Education on the revenue collected pursuant to this paragraph, the amount carried forward, the criteria used to make awards, the amount and number of awards for each criterion, and a delineation of the distribution of such awards. The report shall include an assessment by category of the financial need of every student who receives an award, regardless of the purpose for which the award is received. Awards that are based on financial need shall be distributed in accordance with a nationally recognized system of need analysis approved by the State Board of Education. An award for academic merit requires a minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent for both initial receipt of the award and renewal of the award.

Section 18. Paragraphs (a) and (c) of subsection (20) of



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section 1009.26, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1009.26 Fee waivers.—

(20)(a) Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, a state university shall waive the out-of-state fee for a student who:

1. Has a grandparent who has established a domicile in this state pursuant to s. 222.17 for at least 5 years preceding an application for the fee waiver ~~is a legal resident as defined in s. 1009.21(1)~~. For purposes of this subsection, the term “grandparent” means a person who has a legal relationship to a student’s parent as the natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian of the student’s parent.

2. Earns a high school diploma comparable to a Florida standard high school diploma, or its equivalent, or completes a home education program.

3.a. Achieves an SAT combined score no lower than the 89th national percentile on the SAT;

b. Achieves an ACT score concordant to the required SAT score in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published national concordance table developed jointly by the College Board and ACT, Inc.; or

c. If a state university accepts the Classic Learning Test (CLT) for admission purposes, achieves a CLT score concordant to the required SAT score specified in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published scoring comparison developed by Classic Learning Initiatives.

4. Beginning with students who initially enroll in the 2022 fall academic term and thereafter, enrolls as a full-time undergraduate student at a state university in the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation.



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(c) Before waiving the out-of-state fee, the state university shall require the student or the student's parent, if the student is a dependent child, to provide a written declaration pursuant to s. 92.525(2) attesting to the student's familial relationship to a grandparent who meets the residency requirement of subparagraph (a)1. ~~is a legal resident~~ and any other corroborating documentation required by regulation of the Board of Governors. A state university is not required to independently verify the statements contained in each declaration if the signatory declares it to be true under the penalties of perjury as required by s. 92.525(2). However, the state university may refer any signed declaration suspected of containing fraudulent representations to law enforcement.

===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete lines 65 - 77

and insert:

duties of the partnership; amending s. 1009.23, F.S.; authorizing the Florida College System to allocate a portion of financial aid fees to assist underrepresented students, rather than students who are members of a targeted gender or ethnic minority population; amending s. 1009.26, F.S.; revising the residency requirement for a grandparent for an out-of-state fee waiver; revising the residency criteria for a grandparent in a specified attestation;

By Senator Calatayud

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1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to higher education; amending s.
 3 11.51, F.S.; authorizing the Office of Program Policy
 4 Analysis and Government Accountability to develop
 5 contracts or agreements with institutions in the State
 6 University System for a specified purpose; amending s.
 7 251.001, F.S.; providing tuition assistance to active
 8 members of the Florida State Guard; amending s.
 9 288.036, F.S.; revising the duties of the Office of
 10 Ocean Economy; amending s. 381.853, F.S.; specifying
 11 that the President of the University of Florida
 12 appoints the members of the scientific advisory
 13 council within the Florida Center for Brain Tumor
 14 Research; amending s. 413.407, F.S.; revising the
 15 qualifications for members of the Assistive Technology
 16 Advisory Council; increasing the maximum term length
 17 for such members; amending s. 446.032, F.S.; revising
 18 the date by which the Department of Education is
 19 required to publish an annual report on apprenticeship
 20 and preapprenticeship programs; amending s. 446.041,
 21 F.S.; requiring the department to take into account
 22 underrepresented groups in administering the
 23 apprenticeship training program, rather than minority
 24 and gender diversity; amending s. 1000.05, F.S.;
 25 renaming the Florida Educational Equity Act as the
 26 "Florida Educational Equality Act"; changing the term
 27 "gender" to "sex"; requiring public schools and
 28 Florida College System institutions to develop and
 29 implement methods and strategies to increase

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30 participation of underrepresented students, rather
 31 than students with certain characteristics, in certain
 32 programs and courses; requiring the Commissioner of
 33 Education and the State Board of Education to utilize
 34 their authority to enforce compliance; amending s.
 35 1000.21, F.S.; renaming Hillsborough Community College
 36 as "Hillsborough State College"; amending s. 1001.706,
 37 F.S.; deleting a requirement that state universities
 38 provide student access to certain information;
 39 amending s. 1001.7065, F.S.; revising academic
 40 standards for the preeminent state research university
 41 program to include a specified average Classic
 42 Learning Test score; amending s. 1004.0971, F.S.;
 43 revising the definition of the term "emergency opioid
 44 antagonist"; amending s. 1004.933, F.S.; authorizing
 45 an institution to enter into an agreement with an
 46 online provider for the adult education or career
 47 instruction portion of the Graduation Alternative to
 48 Traditional Education (GATE) Program; removing the age
 49 limit for enrollment in the program; clarifying that
 50 students are not required to enroll in adult secondary
 51 and career education coursework simultaneously;
 52 amending s. 1006.73, F.S.; revising reporting
 53 requirements relating to the Florida Postsecondary
 54 Academic Library Network; amending s. 1007.34, F.S.;
 55 expanding the scope of the college reach-out program
 56 to all low-income educationally disadvantaged and
 57 underrepresented students regardless of minority
 58 status; amending s. 1007.35, F.S.; revising

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59 legislative findings; renaming the Florida Partnership
 60 for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement
 61 as the "Florida Partnership for Underrepresented
 62 Student Achievement"; revising the purposes and duties
 63 of the partnership to focus on all underrepresented
 64 students regardless of minority status; revising
 65 duties of the partnership; amending s. 1009.21, F.S.;
 66 defining the term "nonresident online student" for
 67 purposes of determining resident status for tuition
 68 purposes; amending s. 1009.23, F.S.; authorizing the
 69 Florida College System to allocate a portion of
 70 financial aid fees to assist underrepresented
 71 students, rather than students who are members of a
 72 targeted gender or ethnic minority population;
 73 amending s. 1009.24, F.S.; requiring that the out-of-
 74 state fee for nonresident online students at state
 75 universities be based on market rates and exceed the
 76 university's current out-of-state fee; amending s.
 77 1009.26, F.S.; repealing a specified fee waiver;
 78 amending s. 1009.536, F.S.; clarifying the required
 79 minimum cumulative weighted grade point average for
 80 the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award; authorizing
 81 students to apply for a Florida Gold Seal CAPE
 82 Scholars award within a specified timeframe before or
 83 after completing the GATE Program; amending s.
 84 1009.897, F.S.; requiring institutions receiving funds
 85 through the Prepping Institutions, Programs,
 86 Employers, and Learners through Incentives for Nursing
 87 Education Fund to allocate funding to health care-

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88 related programs; amending s. 1011.804, F.S.;
 89 authorizing certain institutions to apply for and use
 90 grant funds under the GATE Startup Grant Program for
 91 specified purposes; amending s. 1013.46, F.S.;
 92 deleting a provision relating to set asides for
 93 construction contracts with minority business
 94 enterprises; amending s. 1007.27, F.S.; conforming a
 95 provision to changes made by the act; providing an
 96 effective date.
 97
 98 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
 99
 100 Section 1. Subsection (5) is added to section 11.51,
 101 Florida Statutes, to read:
 102 11.51 Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government
 103 Accountability.—
 104 (5) The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government
 105 Accountability may develop contracts or agreements with
 106 institutions in the State University System to use the expertise
 107 of state university faculty and research staff to provide
 108 assistance in analysis and evaluative research.
 109 Section 2. Subsection (9) of section 251.001, Florida
 110 Statutes, is amended to read:
 111 251.001 Florida State Guard Act.—
 112 (9) REIMBURSEMENT, BENEFIT, AND COMPENSATION.—
 113 (a) The division shall reimburse members of the Florida
 114 State Guard for per diem and travel expenses incurred to attend
 115 required training or in the course of active service as provided
 116 in s. 112.061.

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(b) Members of the Florida State Guard may be compensated for time spent training or in the course of active service at rates established by the director, subject to appropriation.

(c) A member of the Florida State Guard may not make any purchase or enter into any contract or agreement for purchases or services as a charge against the state without the authority of the director.

(d) As a benefit to the active members of the Florida State Guard, subject to approval by the director of the Division of the State Guard, each state university and Florida College System institution shall waive tuition and fees for active members of the Florida State Guard to enroll for up to 6 credit hours of courses per term on a space-available basis.

Section 3. Subsections (3) and (4) of section 288.036, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

288.036 Ocean economy development.—

(3) The Office of Ocean Economy shall:

(a) Develop and undertake activities and strategies with a focus on research and development, technological innovation, emerging industries, strategic business recruitment, public and private funding opportunities, and workforce training and education to promote and stimulate the ocean economy.

(b)1. Collaborate ~~Foster relationships~~ and coordinate with state universities, private universities, career centers, and Florida College System institutions, including the College of the Florida Keys, to periodically survey ~~surveying~~ the development of academic research relating to the ocean economy across all disciplines and facilitating the transfer of innovative technology into marketable goods and services. ~~The~~

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~~office shall encourage collaboration between state universities and Florida College System institutions that have overlapping areas of academic research.~~

2. Include and update on the office's website information related to:

a. An inventory of current research and current collaborations, including contact information; and

b. Any available resources for research and technology development, including financial opportunities.

(c) Collaborate with relevant industries to identify economic challenges that may be solved through innovation in the ocean economy, including commercializing or otherwise facilitating public access to academic research and resources, removing governmental barriers, strengthening the workforce, and maximizing access to financial or other opportunities for growth and development.

(d) Develop and facilitate a pipeline for innovative ideas and strategies to be created, developed, researched, commercialized, and financed. This includes promotion and coordination of industry collaboration, academic research, accelerator programs, training and technical assistance, and startup or second-stage funding opportunities.

(e) Maintain and update on the office's website:

1. Reports and data on the number, growth, and average wages of jobs included in the ocean economy; the impacts on the number, growth, and development of businesses in the ocean economy; and the collaboration, transition, or adoption of innovation and research into new, viable ideas employed in the ocean economy.

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2. A current inventory of programs related to the ocean economy, an evaluation of additional opportunities to earn credentials, and the institutions or training providers where such credentials may be earned.

(f) Educate other state and local entities on the interests of the ocean economy and how such entities may positively address environmental issues while simultaneously considering the economic impact of their policies.

(g) Communicate the state's role as an integral component of the ocean economy by promoting the state on national and international platforms and other appropriate forums as the premier destination for convening on pertinent subject matters.

(h) Collaborate with public and private educational and industry organizations to make recommendations:

1. For strengthening employment opportunities in:

a. Commercial fishing;

b. Fisheries and aquaculture, marine and freshwater;

c. Processing and preserving fish, crustaceans, and mollusks;

d. Shipbuilding and repair; and

e. Shipping, water transport such as sea and coastal and inland water transportation of both freight and passengers, ports, and related services and support activities.

2. Regarding the expansion of existing maritime programs and the addition of new programs and strategies for a public awareness campaign.

3. To increase the availability of dual enrollment, preapprenticeship and apprenticeship, and work-study programs at both public and private institutions.

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4. For aligning the regulatory framework for fishing and boat operations with the demand for personnel through consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

(4) By August 1, 2025, and each August 1 thereafter, the office shall provide to the Board of Governors, the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives and post on its website a detailed report on demonstrating the economic benefits of the office and the development of emerging ocean economy industries. By August 1, 2026, the report must include the recommendations in paragraph (3) (h).

Section 4. Subsection (4) of section 381.853, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

381.853 Florida Center for Brain Tumor Research.—

(4) There is established within the center a scientific advisory council that includes biomedical researchers, physicians, clinicians, and representatives from public and private universities and hospitals. The council shall meet at least annually.

(a) The council shall consist of members appointed by the President of the University of Florida, in consultation with the dean of the University of Florida College of Medicine:

1. Two members from the Florida Center for Brain Tumor Research within the Evelyn F. and William L. McKnight Brain Institute of the University of Florida ~~appointed by the Governor.~~

2. Two members from The Scripps Research Institute, one of whom must have expertise in basic brain tumor research, ~~appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.~~

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233 3. Two members from other public and private universities
 234 and institutions directly involved in brain tumor research
 235 ~~appointed by the President of the Senate.~~

236 4. One member from the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville who is
 237 directly involved in the treatment of brain tumor patients or
 238 who has expertise in basic brain tumor ~~research appointed by the~~
 239 ~~State Surgeon General.~~

240 5. Two members from the Cleveland Clinic in Florida who are
 241 directly involved in basic brain tumor research ~~appointed by the~~
 242 ~~Governor.~~

243 6. One member from the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and
 244 Research Institute who is directly involved in the treatment of
 245 brain tumor patients or who has expertise in basic brain tumor
 246 research ~~appointed by the Speaker of the House of~~
 247 ~~Representatives.~~

248 7. One member from the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center Orlando
 249 who is directly involved in the treatment of brain tumor
 250 patients or who has expertise in basic brain tumor research
 251 ~~appointed by the President of the Senate.~~

252 (b) Council members shall serve staggered 4-year terms.

253 (c) Council members shall serve without compensation, and
 254 each organization represented shall cover all expenses of its
 255 representative.

256 Section 5. Paragraphs (d) and (f) of subsection (1) of
 257 section 413.407, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

258 413.407 Assistive Technology Advisory Council.—There is
 259 created the Assistive Technology Advisory Council, responsible
 260 for ensuring consumer involvement in the creation, application,
 261 and distribution of technology-related assistance to and for

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262 persons who have disabilities. The council shall fulfill its
 263 responsibilities through statewide policy development, state and
 264 federal legislative initiatives, advocacy at the state and
 265 federal levels, planning of statewide resource allocations,
 266 policy-level management, and reviews of consumer responsiveness
 267 and the adequacy of program service delivery and by performing
 268 the functions listed in this section.

269 (1)

270 (d) Members of the council must be geographically
 271 representative of the state and reflect the ~~diversity of the~~
 272 state's population with respect to ~~race, ethnicity, gender, age,~~
 273 type of disability, and type of disability-related services and
 274 devices received.

275 (f)1. Each member of the council shall serve for a term of
 276 not more than 5 3 years, except that a member appointed to fill
 277 a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which
 278 a predecessor was appointed shall be appointed for the remainder
 279 of such term.

280 2. A member of the council may not serve more than two
 281 consecutive terms; however, any appointment under subparagraph
 282 1., if for less than 18 months, is not considered a term for the
 283 purposes of this section.

284 3. A member who has served two consecutive terms and has
 285 been retired from the council for at least 3 years may be
 286 reappointed to the council on the same basis as a new member.

287 Section 6. Subsection (2) of section 446.032, Florida
 288 Statutes, is amended to read:

289 446.032 General duties of the department for apprenticeship
 290 training.—The department shall:

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291 (2) By ~~November 30~~ September 1 of each year, publish an
 292 annual report on apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs.
 293 The report must be published on the department's website and, at
 294 a minimum, include all of the following:

295 (a) A list of registered apprenticeship and
 296 preapprenticeship programs, sorted by local educational agency,
 297 as defined in s. 1004.02(18), and apprenticeship sponsor, under
 298 s. 446.071.

299 (b) A detailed summary of each local educational agency's
 300 expenditure of funds for apprenticeship and preapprenticeship
 301 programs, including:

302 1. The total amount of funds received for apprenticeship
 303 and preapprenticeship programs.

304 2. The total amount of funds allocated by training
 305 provider, program, and occupation.

306 3. The total amount of funds expended for administrative
 307 costs by training provider, program, and occupation.

308 4. The total amount of funds expended for instructional
 309 costs by training provider, program, and occupation.

310 (c) The number of apprentices and preapprentices per trade
 311 and occupation.

312 (d) The percentage of apprentices and preapprentices who
 313 complete their respective programs in the appropriate timeframe.

314 (e) Information and resources related to applications for
 315 new apprenticeship programs and technical assistance and
 316 requirements for potential applicants.

317 (f) Documentation of activities conducted by the department
 318 to promote apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs through
 319 public engagement, community-based partnerships, and other

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320 initiatives and the outcomes of such activities and their impact
 321 on establishing or expanding apprenticeship and
 322 preapprenticeship programs.

323 (g) Retention and completion rates of participants
 324 disaggregated by training provider, program, and occupation.

325 (h) Wage progression of participants as demonstrated by
 326 starting, exit, and postapprenticeship wages at 1 and 5 years
 327 after participants exit the program.

328 Section 7. Subsection (12) of section 446.041, Florida
 329 Statutes, is amended to read:

330 446.041 Duties of the department.—The department shall:

331 (12) Ensure that underrepresented groups ~~minority and~~
 332 ~~gender diversity~~ are considered in administering this program.

333 Section 8. Subsection (1), paragraph (d) of subsection (2),
 334 paragraph (e) of subsection (3), subsection (5), and subsection
 335 (7) of section 1000.05, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

336 1000.05 Discrimination against students and employees in
 337 the Florida K-20 public education system prohibited; equality of
 338 access required.—

339 (1) This section may be cited as the "Florida Educational
 340 Equality ~~Equity~~ Act."

341 (2)

342 (d) Students may be separated by sex for a single-sex
 343 ~~single-gender~~ program, for any portion of a class that deals
 344 with human reproduction, or during participation in bodily
 345 contact sports. For the purpose of this section, bodily contact
 346 sports include wrestling, boxing, rugby, ice hockey, football,
 347 basketball, and other sports in which the purpose or major
 348 activity involves bodily contact.

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(3)

(e) A public school or Florida College System institution may provide separate toilet, locker room, and shower facilities on the basis of ~~sex~~ gender, but such facilities shall be comparable to such facilities provided for students of the other sex.

(5) Public schools and Florida College System institutions shall develop and implement methods and strategies to increase the participation of underrepresented students ~~of a particular race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or marital status~~ in programs and courses in which students ~~of that particular race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or marital status~~ have been traditionally underrepresented, including, but not limited to, mathematics, science, computer technology, electronics, communications technology, engineering, and career education.

(7) The functions of the Office of Equal Educational Opportunity of the Department of Education shall include, but are not limited to:

(a) Requiring all district school boards and Florida College System institution boards of trustees to develop and submit plans for the implementation of this section to the Department of Education.

(b) Conducting periodic reviews of school districts and Florida College System institutions to determine compliance with this section and, after a finding that a school district or a Florida College System institution is not in compliance with this section, notifying the entity of the steps that it must take to attain compliance and performing followup monitoring.

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(c) Providing technical assistance, including assisting school districts or Florida College System institutions in identifying unlawful discrimination and instructing them in remedies for correction and prevention of such discrimination and performing followup monitoring.

(d) Conducting studies of the effectiveness of methods and strategies designed to increase the participation of students in programs and courses in which students of a particular race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or marital status have been traditionally underrepresented and monitoring the success of students in such programs or courses, including performing followup monitoring.

(e) Requiring all district school boards and Florida College System institution boards of trustees to submit data and information necessary to determine compliance with this section. The Commissioner of Education shall prescribe the format and the date for submission of such data and any other educational equity data. If any board does not submit the required compliance data or other required educational equity data by the prescribed date, the commissioner shall notify the board of this fact and, if the board does not take appropriate action to immediately submit the required report, the State Board of Education shall impose monetary sanctions.

(f) Based upon rules of the State Board of Education, developing and implementing enforcement mechanisms with appropriate penalties to ensure that public K-12 schools and Florida College System institutions comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and subsection (3) of this section. However, the State Board of Education may not force a public

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school or Florida College System institution to conduct, nor penalize such entity for not conducting, a program of athletic activity or athletic scholarship for female athletes unless it is an athletic activity approved for women by a recognized association whose purpose is to promote athletics and a conference or league exists to promote interscholastic or intercollegiate competition for women in that athletic activity.

~~(g) Reporting to The Commissioner of Education any district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees found to be out of compliance with rules of the State Board of Education adopted as required by paragraph (f) or paragraph (3)(d). To penalize the board, the State Board of Education shall:~~

~~1. Declare the school district or Florida College System institution ineligible for competitive state grants.~~

~~2. Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 216.192, direct the Chief Financial Officer to withhold general revenue funds sufficient to obtain compliance from the school district or Florida College System institution.~~

~~The school district or Florida College System institution shall remain ineligible and the funds shall not be paid until the institution comes into compliance or the State Board of Education approves a plan for compliance.~~

The Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education shall use their authority under s. 1008.32 to enforce compliance with this subsection.

Section 9. Paragraph (j) of subsection (5) of section

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1000.21, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1000.21 Systemwide definitions.—As used in the Florida Early Learning-20 Education Code:

(5) "Florida College System institution" except as otherwise specifically provided, includes all of the following public postsecondary educational institutions in the Florida College System and any branch campuses, centers, or other affiliates of the institution:

(j) Hillsborough State Community College, which serves Hillsborough County.

Section 10. Paragraph (d) of subsection (5) of section 1001.706, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1001.706 Powers and duties of the Board of Governors.—

(5) POWERS AND DUTIES RELATING TO ACCOUNTABILITY.—

(d) The Board of Governors shall annually require a state university prior to registration to provide each enrolled student electronic access to the economic security report of employment and earning outcomes prepared by the Department of Commerce pursuant to s. 445.07. ~~In addition, the Board of Governors shall require a state university to provide each student electronic access to the following information each year prior to registration using the data described in s. 1008.39:~~

~~1. The top 25 percent of degrees reported by the university in terms of highest full-time job placement and highest average annualized earnings in the year after earning the degree.~~

~~2. The bottom 10 percent of degrees reported by the university in terms of lowest full-time job placement and lowest average annualized earnings in the year after earning the degree.~~

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465 Section 11. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section
 466 1001.7065, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
 467 1001.7065 Preeminent state research universities program.—
 468 (2) ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE STANDARDS.—The
 469 following academic and research excellence standards are
 470 established for the preeminent state research universities
 471 program and shall be reported annually in the Board of Governors
 472 Accountability Plan:
 473 (a) An average weighted grade point average of 4.0 or
 474 higher on a 4.0 scale and an average SAT score of 1200 or higher
 475 on a 1600-point scale or an average ACT score of 25 or higher on
 476 a 36 score scale, using the latest published national
 477 concordance table developed jointly by the College Board and
 478 ACT, Inc., or an average Classic Learning Test score of 83 or
 479 higher on a 120 score scale, for fall semester incoming
 480 freshmen, as reported annually.
 481 Section 12. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section
 482 1004.0971, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
 483 1004.0971 Emergency opioid antagonists in Florida College
 484 System institution and state university housing.—
 485 (1) As used in this section, the term:
 486 (b) "Emergency opioid antagonist" means a naloxone
 487 hydrochloride or any similarly acting drug that blocks the
 488 effects of opioids administered from outside the body and that
 489 is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration
 490 for the treatment of an opioid overdose.
 491 Section 13. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) and paragraph
 492 (b) of subsection (4) of section 1004.933, Florida Statutes, are
 493 amended to read:

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494 1004.933 Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education
 495 (GATE) Program.—
 496 (3) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:
 497 (b) "Institution" means any ~~a~~ school district career center
 498 established under s. 1001.44, a charter technical career center
 499 established under s. 1002.34, or a Florida College System
 500 institution identified in s. 1000.21. Any such institution may
 501 enter into an agreement with an online provider for the adult
 502 education or career instruction portion of the program if such
 503 provider offers instructional content and services that align
 504 with the state career and adult education curriculum frameworks.
 505 (4) PAYMENT WAIVER; ELIGIBILITY.—
 506 (b) To be eligible for participation in the GATE Program, a
 507 student must:
 508 1. Not have earned a standard high school diploma pursuant
 509 to s. 1003.4282 or a high school equivalency diploma pursuant to
 510 s. 1003.435 before enrolling in the GATE Program;
 511 2. Have been withdrawn from high school;
 512 3. Be a resident of this state as defined in s. 1009.21(1);
 513 4. Be at least 16 ~~to 21~~ years of age at the time of initial
 514 enrollment, provided that a student who is 16 or 17 years of age
 515 has withdrawn from school enrollment pursuant to the
 516 requirements and safeguards in s. 1003.21(1)(c);
 517 5. Select the adult secondary education program and career
 518 education program of his or her choice at the time of admission
 519 to the GATE Program, provided that the career education program
 520 is included on the Master Credentials List under s. 445.004(4).
 521 The student is not required to enroll in adult secondary and
 522 career education program coursework simultaneously. The student

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may not change the requested pathway after enrollment, except that, if necessary for the student, the student may enroll in an adult basic education program prior to enrolling in the adult secondary education program;

6. Maintain a 2.0 GPA for career and technical education coursework; and

7. Notwithstanding s. 1003.435(4), complete the programs under subparagraph 5. within 3 years after his or her initial enrollment unless the institution determines that an extension is warranted due to extenuating circumstances.

Section 14. Subsections (5) and (7) of section 1006.73, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1006.73 Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network.—

(5) REPORTING.—

~~(a)~~ By December 31 each year, the host entity shall submit a report to the Chancellors of the State University System and the Florida College System regarding the implementation and operation of all components described in this section, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(a)1- Usage information collected under paragraph (2)(c).

(b)2- Information and associated costs relating to the services and functions of the program.

(c)3- The implementation and operation of the automated library services.

(d)4- The number and value of grants awarded under paragraph (4)(d) and the distribution of those funds.

~~5. The number and types of courses placed in the Student Open Access Resources Repository.~~

~~6. Information on the utilization of the Student Open~~

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~~Access Resources Repository and utilization of open educational resources in course sections, by Florida College System institution and state university.~~

~~(b) The Chancellors will provide an annual report on the performance of the host entity in delivering the services and any recommendations for changes needed to this section to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Board of Governors, and the State Board of Education. The Board of Governors and the Department of Education shall include any necessary funding increases in their annual legislative budget requests.~~

~~(7) RECOMMENDATION ON OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE FLORIDA POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC LIBRARY NETWORK.—By June 1, 2022, the Commissioner of Education and the Chancellor of the Board of Governors shall provide a joint recommendation for a process by which school district career centers operated under s. 1001.44 and charter technical career centers under s. 1002.34 would access appropriate postsecondary distance learning, student support services and library assets described in this section. The recommendation must include an analysis of the resources necessary to expand access and assets to centers and their students.~~

Section 15. Paragraph (d) of subsection (5) and paragraph (c) of subsection (7) of section 1007.34, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1007.34 College reach-out program.—

(5) In selecting proposals for approval, the State Board of Education shall give preference to:

(d) A program that includes innovative approaches, provides

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a great variety of activities, and includes a large percentage of low-income educationally disadvantaged and underrepresented minority students in the college reach-out program.

(7) A proposal must contain the following information:

(c) An identification of existing programs for enhancing the academic performance of ~~minority and~~ low-income educationally disadvantaged and underrepresented students for enrollment in postsecondary education.

Section 16. Section 1007.35, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1007.35 Florida Partnership for ~~Minority and~~ Underrepresented Student Achievement.—

(1) This section may be referred to by the popular name the “Florida Partnership for ~~Minority and~~ Underrepresented Student Achievement Act.”

(2)(a) The Legislature recognizes the importance of not only access to college but also success in college for all students. It is the intent of the Legislature that every student enrolled in a public secondary school has access to high-quality, rigorous academics, with a particular focus on access to advanced courses. The Legislature also recognizes the importance of other career pathways, such as vocational and trade schools, and the importance of incentivizing the availability of high school programs to prepare students for those career paths.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide assistance to all public secondary schools, with a primary focus on low-performing middle and high schools.

~~(c) It is the intent of the Legislature that the~~

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~~partnership created in this section accomplish its mission primarily through strengthening the content knowledge of teachers and providing instructional resources, including materials and strategies, which enable teachers to provide instruction to students who have diverse learning styles.~~

(3) There is created the Florida Partnership for ~~Minority and~~ Underrepresented Student Achievement. The Department of Education may contract for operation of the partnership.

(4) The mission of the partnership is to prepare, inspire, and connect students to postsecondary success and opportunity, with a particular focus on ~~minority students and~~ students who are underrepresented in postsecondary education.

(5) Each public high school, including, but not limited to, schools and alternative sites and centers of the Department of Juvenile Justice, shall provide for the administration of the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), or the PreACT to all enrolled 10th grade students. However, a written notice shall be provided to each parent which must include the opportunity to exempt his or her child from taking the PSAT/NMSQT or the PreACT.

(a) Test results will provide each high school with a database of student assessment data which certified school counselors will use to identify students who are prepared or who need additional work to be prepared to enroll and be successful in advanced high school courses.

(b) Funding for the PSAT/NMSQT or the PreACT for all 10th grade students shall be contingent upon annual funding in the General Appropriations Act.

(c) Public school districts must choose either the

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PSAT/NMSQT or the PreACT for districtwide administration.

(6) The partnership shall:

~~(a) Provide teacher training and professional learning to enable teachers of advanced courses to have the necessary content knowledge and instructional skills to prepare students for success on assessments developed pursuant to s. 1007.27(2) and mastery of postsecondary general education core courses.~~

~~(b) Provide to middle school teachers and administrators professional learning that will enable them to educate middle school students at the level necessary to prepare the students to enter high school ready to participate in advanced courses.~~

~~(c) Provide teacher training and materials that are aligned with the state standards and are consistent with best theory and practice regarding multiple learning styles and research on learning, instructional strategies, instructional design, and classroom assessment. Curriculum materials must be based on current, accepted, and essential academic knowledge.~~

~~(d)~~ Provide assessment of individual strengths and weaknesses as related to potential success in advanced courses and readiness for college.

(b)(e) Provide college entrance exam preparation through a variety of means that may include, but are not limited to, training teachers to provide courses at schools; training community organizations to provide courses at community centers, faith-based organizations, and businesses; and providing online courses.

~~(f) Consider ways to incorporate Florida College System institutions in the mission of preparing all students for postsecondary success.~~

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(c)(g) Provide a plan for communication and coordination of efforts with the Florida Virtual School's provision of online advanced courses.

(d)(h) Work with school districts to identify ~~minority and~~ underrepresented students for participation in advanced courses.

(e)(i) Work with school districts to provide information to students and parents that explains available opportunities for students to take advanced courses and that explains enrollment procedures that students must follow to enroll in such courses. Such information must also explain the value of such courses as they relate to:

1. Preparing the student for postsecondary level coursework.

2. Enabling the student to gain access to postsecondary education opportunities.

3. Qualifying for scholarships and other financial aid opportunities.

(f)(j) Provide information to students, parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, districts, Florida College System institutions, and state universities regarding PSAT/NMSQT or the PreACT administration, including, but not limited to:

1. Test administration dates and times.

2. That participation in the PSAT/NMSQT or the PreACT is open to all 10th grade students.

3. The value of such tests in providing diagnostic feedback on student skills.

4. The value of student scores in predicting the probability of success on advanced course examinations.

~~(k) Cooperate with the department to provide information to~~

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~~administrators, teachers, and counselors, whenever possible, about partnership activities, opportunities, and priorities.~~

(g)(1) Partner with the Florida College System institutions and state universities identified by the State Board of Education and Board of Governors pursuant to s. 1007.25(3) to develop advanced courses ~~and provide teacher training.~~

(7) By May 31 of each year, the Department of Education shall approve a plan of delivery of services for the subsequent academic year.

(8)(a) By September 30 of each year, the partnership shall submit to the department a report that contains an evaluation of the effectiveness of the delivered services and activities. Activities and services must be evaluated on their effectiveness at raising student achievement and increasing the number of AP or other advanced course examinations in low-performing middle and high schools. Other indicators that must be addressed in the evaluation report include the number of middle and high school teachers trained; the effectiveness of the training; measures of postsecondary readiness of the students affected by the program; levels of participation in 10th grade PSAT/NMSQT or the PreACT testing; and measures of student, parent, and teacher awareness of and satisfaction with the services of the partnership.

(b) The department shall contribute to the evaluation process by providing access, consistent with s. 119.071(5)(a), to student and teacher information necessary to match against databases containing teacher professional learning data and databases containing assessment data for the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, ACT, PreACT, AP, and other appropriate measures. The department shall also provide student-level data on student progress from

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middle school through high school and into college and the workforce, if available, in order to support longitudinal studies. The partnership shall analyze and report student performance data in a manner that protects the rights of students and parents as required in 20 U.S.C. s. 1232g and s. 1002.22.

(9)(a) Funding for the partnership shall be contingent upon annual funding in the General Appropriations Act.

(b) The participating partner, if one is chosen, is required to match at least one-third of the allocation provided to the partnership in the General Appropriations Act in materials and services to the program.

(10) Nothing in this section shall prohibit any organization from partnering with the state to improve the college readiness of students.

Section 17. Present paragraphs (e), (f), and (g) of subsection (1) of section 1009.21, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as paragraphs (f), (g), and (h), respectively, and a new paragraph (e) is added to that subsection, to read:

1009.21 Determination of resident status for tuition purposes.—Students shall be classified as residents or nonresidents for the purpose of assessing tuition in postsecondary educational programs offered by charter technical career centers or career centers operated by school districts, in Florida College System institutions, and in state universities.

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(e) "Nonresident online student" means a person who is admitted to a Florida College System institution or state

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university as an online student and does not qualify for in-state tuition or fee rates.

Section 18. Paragraph (c) of subsection (8) of section 1009.23, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.23 Florida College System institution student fees.—

(8)(c) Up to 25 percent or \$600,000, whichever is greater, of the financial aid fees collected may be used to assist students who demonstrate academic merit; who participate in athletics, public service, cultural arts, and other extracurricular programs as determined by the institution; or who are identified as members of an underrepresented ~~a targeted gender or ethnic minority~~ population. The financial aid fee revenues allocated for athletic scholarships and any fee exemptions provided to athletes pursuant to s. 1009.25(2) must be distributed equitably as required by s. 1000.05(3)(d). A minimum of 75 percent of the balance of these funds for new awards shall be used to provide financial aid based on absolute need, and the remainder of the funds shall be used for academic merit purposes and other purposes approved by the boards of trustees. Such other purposes shall include the payment of child care fees for students with financial need. The State Board of Education shall develop criteria for making financial aid awards. Each college shall report annually to the Department of Education on the revenue collected pursuant to this paragraph, the amount carried forward, the criteria used to make awards, the amount and number of awards for each criterion, and a delineation of the distribution of such awards. The report shall include an assessment by category of the financial need of every student who receives an award, regardless of the purpose for

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which the award is received. Awards that are based on financial need shall be distributed in accordance with a nationally recognized system of need analysis approved by the State Board of Education. An award for academic merit requires a minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent for both initial receipt of the award and renewal of the award.

Section 19. Present paragraphs (b) through (e) of subsection (4) of section 1009.24, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as paragraphs (c) through (f), respectively, and a new paragraph (b) is added to that subsection, to read:

1009.24 State university student fees.—

(4)

(b) The out-of-state fee for nonresident online students as defined in s. 1009.21(1)(e) must be based on market rates and must exceed the university's regular out-of-state fee.

Section 20. Subsection (20) of section 1009.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.26 Fee waivers.—

~~(20)(a) Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, a state university shall waive the out-of-state fee for a student who:~~

~~1. Has a grandparent who is a legal resident as defined in s. 1009.21(1). For purposes of this subsection, the term "grandparent" means a person who has a legal relationship to a student's parent as the natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian of the student's parent.~~

~~2. Earns a high school diploma comparable to a Florida standard high school diploma, or its equivalent, or completes a home education program.~~

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3.a. Achieves an SAT combined score no lower than the 89th national percentile on the SAT;

b. Achieves an ACT score concordant to the required SAT score in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published national concordance table developed jointly by the College Board and ACT, Inc.; or

c. If a state university accepts the Classic Learning Test (CLT) for admission purposes, achieves a CLT score concordant to the required SAT score specified in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published scoring comparison developed by Classic Learning Initiatives.

4. Beginning with students who initially enroll in the 2022 fall academic term and thereafter, enrolls as a full-time undergraduate student at a state university in the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation.

(b) The waiver under this subsection is applicable for up to 110 percent of the number of required credit hours of the degree program for which the student is enrolled.

(c) Before waiving the out-of-state fee, the state university shall require the student or the student's parent, if the student is a dependent child, to provide a written declaration pursuant to s. 92.525(2) attesting to the student's familial relationship to a grandparent who is a legal resident and any other corroborating documentation required by regulation of the Board of Governors. A state university is not required to independently verify the statements contained in each declaration if the signatory declares it to be true under the penalties of perjury as required by s. 92.525(2). However, the state university may refer any signed declaration suspected of

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containing fraudulent representations to law enforcement.

(d) Each state university annually shall report to the Board of Governors the number and value of all fee waivers granted under this subsection during the previous 12-month period.

(e) Beginning with students who initially enroll for the 2022-2023 academic year or thereafter, a state university shall, within the nonresident student enrollment systemwide, prioritize the enrollment of a student who is granted a fee waiver under this subsection over an out-of-state student who is not eligible for an out-of-state fee waiver if the students have substantially similar academic and other credentials used in determining admission to the state university.

(f) Fee waivers granted pursuant to this subsection may not exceed 350 students systemwide each academic year.

(g) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations to administer this subsection.

Section 21. Subsection (2) of section 1009.536, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsection (6) is added to that section, to read:

1009.536 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars awards.—The Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award and the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award are created within the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program to recognize and reward academic achievement and career preparation by high school students who wish to continue their education.

(2) A student is eligible for a Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award if he or she meets the general eligibility requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program,

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and the student:

(a) Earns a minimum of ~~3~~ 5 postsecondary credit hours through CAPE industry certifications approved pursuant to s. 1008.44 which articulate for college credit; ~~and~~

(b) Earns a minimum cumulative weighted grade point average of 2.5, as calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, on all subjects required for a standard high school diploma, excluding elective courses; and

(c) Completes at least 30 hours of volunteer service or, beginning with a high school student graduating in the 2022-2023 academic year and thereafter, 100 hours of paid work, approved by the district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school, or the Department of Education for home education program students, or 100 hours of a combination of both. Eligible paid work completed on or after June 27, 2022, shall be included in a student's total required paid work hours. The student may identify a social or civic issue or a professional area that interests him or her and develop a plan for his or her personal involvement in addressing the issue or learning about the area. The student must, through papers or other presentations, evaluate and reflect upon his or her experience. Such volunteer service or paid work may include, but is not limited to, a business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on behalf of a candidate for public office. The hours of volunteer service or paid work must be documented in writing, and the document must be signed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, and a representative of the organization for which the student performed the volunteer service or paid work.

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(6) Before or within 3 months after completion of the GATE Program as provided in s. 1004.933, a student may apply for the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award.

Section 22. Present subsection (4) of section 1009.897, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (5), and a new subsection (4) is added to that section, to read:

1009.897 Prepping Institutions, Programs, Employers, and Learners through Incentives for Nursing Education (PIPELINE) Fund.—

(4) Each institution that receives funds through the PIPELINE Fund shall allocate the funds to its health care industry-related programs.

Section 23. Subsections (3) and (6) of section 1011.804, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1011.804 GATE Startup Grant Program.—

(3) The department may solicit proposals from institutions without programs that meet the requirements of s. 1004.933(2). Such institutions must be located in or serve a rural area of opportunity as designated by the Governor. Additionally, institutions that meet program requirements and are located in or serve a rural area of opportunity may apply for grant funds specifically for marketing and outreach efforts to expand student participation in the GATE Program.

(6) Grant funds may be used for planning activities and other expenses associated with the creation of the GATE Program, such as expenses related to program instruction, instructional equipment, supplies, instructional personnel, ~~and~~ student services, and outreach and marketing efforts to recruit and enroll eligible students. Institutions with existing programs

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 929 that meet the requirements of s. 1004.933(2) and that are
 930 located in or serve a rural area of opportunity may apply for
 931 grant funds exclusively for marketing and outreach purposes to
 932 expand student participation in the GATE Program. Grant funds
 933 may not be used for indirect costs. Grant recipients must submit
 934 an annual report in a format prescribed by the department. The
 935 department shall consolidate such annual reports and include the
 936 reports in the report required by s. 1004.933(5).

937 Section 24. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section
 938 1013.46, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

939 1013.46 Advertising and awarding contracts;
 940 prequalification of contractor.—

941 (1)

942 ~~(c) As an option, any county, municipality, or board may~~
 943 ~~set aside up to 10 percent of the total amount of funds~~
 944 ~~allocated for the purpose of entering into construction capital~~
 945 ~~project contracts with minority business enterprises, as defined~~
 946 ~~in s. 287.094. Such contracts shall be competitively bid only~~
 947 ~~among minority business enterprises. The set-aside shall be used~~
 948 ~~to redress present effects of past discriminatory practices and~~
 949 ~~shall be subject to periodic reassessment to account for~~
 950 ~~changing needs and circumstances.~~

951 Section 25. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section
 952 1007.27, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

953 1007.27 Articulated acceleration mechanisms.—

954 (1)

955 (b) The State Board of Education and the Board of Governors
 956 shall identify Florida College System institutions and state
 957 universities to develop courses that align with s. 1007.25 for

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 958 students in secondary education ~~and provide the training~~
 959 ~~required under s. 1007.35(6).~~

960 Section 26. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.