

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to higher education; creating s.  
3           20.70, F.S.; providing residency requirements for  
4           members of certain public postsecondary boards;  
5           amending s. 112.3144, F.S.; requiring certain members  
6           of the Board of Governors to comply with specified  
7           financial disclosure requirements beginning on a date  
8           certain; amending s. 1001.01, F.S.; revising term  
9           limits for members and the chair of the State Board of  
10          Education; amending s. 1001.61, F.S.; providing term  
11          limits for members and the chairs of the Florida  
12          College System institution boards of trustees;  
13          authorizing trustees to serve until the appointment of  
14          a successor; amending s. 1001.64, F.S.; providing that  
15          certain actions related to the president of a Florida  
16          College System institution are not subject to approval  
17          by the State Board of Education; requiring  
18          presidential search committees for the appointment of  
19          such president; providing requirements for the  
20          committees; requiring such president be recommended by  
21          the committee; authorizing a presidential contract to  
22          be renewed for a specified period; amending s.  
23          1001.70, F.S.; providing term limits for appointed  
24          members of the Board of Governors; amending s.  
25          1001.706, F.S.; requiring the Board of Governors to

26 review the admission criteria of state universities;  
27 requiring state university program admission criteria  
28 to be posted on state university websites; providing  
29 that the president of a state university is appointed  
30 by the university board of trustees; requiring  
31 presidential search committees for the appointment of  
32 such president; providing requirements for the  
33 committees; requiring such president be recommended by  
34 the committee; deleting a requirement that the Board  
35 of Governors confirm the selection and reappointment  
36 of such president; authorizing a presidential contract  
37 to be renewed for a specified period; revising the  
38 requirements for certain state university capital  
39 outlay projects to be included on a specified list;  
40 amending s. 1001.71, F.S.; providing term limits for  
41 appointed members of university boards of trustees;  
42 deleting obsolete language and a certain consideration  
43 for appointed members; authorizing appointed members  
44 to serve until a successor is appointed; amending s.  
45 1004.085, F.S.; providing definitions; revising  
46 requirements for information included in specified  
47 lists relating to textbooks and instructional  
48 materials; requiring the current syllabi for specified  
49 courses to be posted as a hyperlink in a specified  
50 system and include specified information; amending s.

51 1004.098, F.S.; requiring state university and Florida  
52 College System institution boards of trustees to adopt  
53 a presidential succession plan for specified purposes;  
54 providing requirements for the plan and persons  
55 included in such plan; providing requirements for the  
56 appointment or selection of an interim president;  
57 prohibiting specified persons from discussing with  
58 specified persons under certain circumstances certain  
59 information or persons relating to the appointment of  
60 a president; deleting a public records and meeting  
61 exemption relating to applicants for president of a  
62 state university or Florida College System  
63 institution; amending s. 1004.89, F.S.; revising the  
64 duties of the Institute for Freedom in the Americas;  
65 deleting provisions relating to a direct-support  
66 organization for the institute; amending s. 1007.25,  
67 F.S.; prohibiting a Florida College System institution  
68 or state university from imposing certain graduation  
69 requirements; providing effective dates.

70  
71 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

72  
73 Section 1. Section 20.70, Florida Statutes, is created to  
74 read:

75 20.70 Residency requirements.—Notwithstanding any other

76 law:

77 (1) (a) Effective January 6, 2027, an appointed member of  
 78 the Board of Governors of the State University System shall be:

79 1. A United States citizen; and

80 2. A state resident or a graduate of a state university.

81 (b) A position on the Board of Governors which is held by  
 82 a person who does not meet the requirements of paragraph (a) on  
 83 or after January 6, 2027, shall be deemed vacant.

84 (2) (a) Effective January 6, 2027, an appointed member of a  
 85 state university board of trustees shall be:

86 1. A United States citizen; and

87 2. A state resident or a graduate of the state university.

88 (b) A position on a university board of trustees which is  
 89 held by a person who does not meet the requirements of paragraph  
 90 (a) on or after January 6, 2027, shall be deemed vacant.

91 Section 2. Paragraph (f) is added to subsection (1) of  
 92 section 112.3144, Florida Statutes, to read:

93 112.3144 Full and public disclosure of financial  
 94 interests.—

95 (1)

96 (f) Beginning January 1, 2026, each citizen member of the  
 97 Board of Governors of the State University System must comply  
 98 with the financial disclosure requirements of s. 8, Art. II of  
 99 the State Constitution and this section.

100 Section 3. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 1001.01,

101 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

102 1001.01 State Board of Education; generally.—

103 (1) The State Board of Education is established as a body  
 104 corporate. The state board shall be a citizen board consisting  
 105 of seven members who are residents of the state appointed by the  
 106 Governor to staggered 4-year terms, subject to confirmation by  
 107 the Senate. Members of the state board shall serve without  
 108 compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement of travel  
 109 and per diem expenses in accordance with s. 112.061. Members may  
 110 only serve two ~~be reappointed by the Governor for additional~~  
 111 ~~terms not to exceed 8 years of consecutive service.~~

112 (2) The State Board of Education shall select a chair and  
 113 a vice chair from its appointed members. The chair shall serve a  
 114 single 2-year term ~~and may be reselected for one additional~~  
 115 ~~consecutive term.~~

116 Section 4. Subsections (2) and (4) of section 1001.61,  
 117 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

118 1001.61 Florida College System institution boards of  
 119 trustees; membership.—

120 (2) Trustees shall be appointed by the Governor to  
 121 staggered 4-year terms, subject to confirmation by the Senate in  
 122 regular session. A trustee may continue to serve until a  
 123 successor is appointed. Trustees may be reappointed by the  
 124 Governor for one additional term, not to exceed 8 consecutive  
 125 years of service.

126 (4) At its first regular meeting after July 1 of each  
127 year, each Florida College System institution board of trustees  
128 shall organize by electing a chair, whose duty as such is to  
129 preside at all meetings of the board, to call special meetings  
130 thereof, and to attest to actions of the board, and a vice  
131 chair, whose duty as such is to act as chair during the absence  
132 or disability of the elected chair. It is the further duty of  
133 the chair of each board of trustees to notify the Governor, in  
134 writing, whenever a board member fails to attend three  
135 consecutive regular board meetings in any one fiscal year, which  
136 absences may be grounds for removal. The chair shall serve a  
137 single 2-year term.

138 Section 5. Subsection (19) of section 1001.64, Florida  
139 Statutes, is amended to read:

140 1001.64 Florida College System institution boards of  
141 trustees; powers and duties.—

142 (19) Each board of trustees shall appoint, suspend, or  
143 remove the president of the Florida College System institution.  
144 Such appointments, reappointments, suspensions, and extensions  
145 of a president, including associated contracts, are not subject  
146 to approval or confirmation by the State Board of Education. In  
147 appointing a permanent president, the chair of the institution  
148 board of trustees shall appoint a presidential search committee.  
149 The presidential search committee shall consist of at least two  
150 members of the board of trustees and may include persons from

151 the institution's faculty, the student body, the institution's  
152 foundation board, the institution's financing corporation board,  
153 if applicable, alumni, donors, and members from the community  
154 the institution serves. However, none of the persons appointed  
155 to serve on the presidential search committee may hold positions  
156 that report directly to the president. The Commissioner of  
157 Education or a member of the State Board of Education may not  
158 serve on a presidential search committee. The permanent  
159 president appointed by the institution board of trustees must be  
160 recommended by the presidential search committee ~~The board of~~  
161 ~~trustees may appoint a search committee.~~ The board of trustees  
162 shall conduct annual evaluations of the president in accordance  
163 with rules of the State Board of Education and submit such  
164 evaluations to the State Board of Education for review. The  
165 evaluation must address the achievement of the performance goals  
166 established by the accountability process implemented pursuant  
167 to s. 1008.45. A presidential contract may be renewed for a term  
168 exceeding 1 year, but not exceeding the term of the original  
169 contract.

170 Section 6. Subsection (1) of section 1001.70, Florida  
171 Statutes, is amended to read:

172 1001.70 Board of Governors of the State University  
173 System.—

174 (1) Pursuant to s. 7(d), Art. IX of the State  
175 Constitution, the Board of Governors is established as a body

176 corporate comprised of 17 members as follows: 14 citizen members  
 177 appointed by the Governor subject to confirmation by the Senate;  
 178 the Commissioner of Education; the chair of the advisory council  
 179 of faculty senates or the equivalent; and the president of the  
 180 Florida student association or the equivalent. The appointed  
 181 members may only ~~shall~~ serve a single ~~staggered~~ 7-year term  
 182 ~~terms. In order to achieve staggered terms, beginning July 1,~~  
 183 ~~2003, of the initial appointments, 4 members shall serve 2-year~~  
 184 ~~terms, 5 members shall serve 3-year terms, and 5 members shall~~  
 185 ~~serve 7-year terms.~~

186 Section 7. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5), paragraph (a)  
 187 of subsection (6), and paragraph (c) of subsection (12) of  
 188 section 1001.706, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

189 1001.706 Powers and duties of the Board of Governors.—

190 (5) POWERS AND DUTIES RELATING TO ACCOUNTABILITY.—

191 (a)1. The Legislature intends that the Board of Governors  
 192 shall align the missions of each constituent university with the  
 193 academic success of its students; the existing and emerging  
 194 economic development needs of the state; the national reputation  
 195 of its faculty and its academic and research programs; the  
 196 quantity of externally generated research, patents, and  
 197 licenses; and the strategic and accountability plans required in  
 198 paragraphs (b) and (c). The Board of Governors shall  
 199 periodically review the mission of each constituent university  
 200 and make updates or revisions as needed. Upon completion of a

201 review of the mission, the board shall review existing academic  
202 programs, including admission criteria, for alignment with the  
203 mission. The board shall include in its review a directive to  
204 each constituent university regarding its programs for any  
205 curriculum or admission criteria that violates s. 1000.05 or  
206 that is based on theories that systemic racism, sexism,  
207 oppression, and privilege are inherent in the institutions of  
208 the United States and were created to maintain social,  
209 political, and economic inequities. The mission alignment and  
210 strategic plan must consider peer institutions at the  
211 constituent universities. The mission alignment and strategic  
212 plan must acknowledge that universities that have a national and  
213 international impact have the greatest capacity to promote the  
214 state's economic development through: new discoveries, patents,  
215 licenses, and technologies that generate state businesses of  
216 global importance; research achievements through external grants  
217 and contracts that are comparable to nationally recognized and  
218 ranked universities; the creation of a resource rich academic  
219 environment that attracts high-technology business and venture  
220 capital to the state; and this generation's finest minds  
221 focusing on solving the state's economic, social, environmental,  
222 and legal problems in the areas of life sciences, water,  
223 sustainability, energy, and health care. A nationally recognized  
224 and ranked university that has a global perspective and impact  
225 must be afforded the opportunity to enable and protect the

226 university's competitiveness on the global stage in fair  
227 competition with other institutions of other states in the  
228 highest Carnegie Classification.

229 2. To assist the Board of Governors in its review of  
230 admission criteria, each constituent university shall post  
231 program admission criteria on its website.

232 (6) POWERS AND DUTIES RELATING TO PERSONNEL.—

233 (a) The Board of Governors, or the board's designee, shall  
234 establish the personnel program for all employees of a state  
235 university, except the president. The board of trustees of a  
236 state university shall select and reappoint the university  
237 president. In appointing a permanent president, the chair of the  
238 university board of trustees shall appoint a presidential search  
239 committee. The presidential search committee shall consist of 15  
240 members consisting of at least three members of the board of  
241 trustees and may include persons from the university's faculty,  
242 the student body, the university's foundation board, the  
243 university's financing corporation board, if applicable, alumni,  
244 donors, and members from the community in which the university  
245 serves. However, none of the persons appointed to serve on the  
246 presidential search committee may hold positions that report  
247 directly to the president. The Chancellor of the State  
248 University System or a member of the Board of Governors may not  
249 serve on the presidential search committee. The permanent  
250 president selected by the board of trustees must have been

251 recommended by the presidential search committee. Selections,  
252 reappointments, and extensions of a president, including  
253 associated contracts, are not subject to approval or  
254 confirmation by the Board of Governors. A presidential contract  
255 may be renewed for a term exceeding 1 year, but not exceeding  
256 the term of the original contract. ~~The Board of Governors shall~~  
257 ~~confirm the presidential selection and reappointment by a~~  
258 ~~university board of trustees as a means of acknowledging that~~  
259 ~~system cooperation is expected.~~

260 (12) PUBLIC EDUCATION CAPITAL OUTLAY.—The Board of  
261 Governors shall submit the prioritized list as required by s.  
262 1013.64(4). Projects considered for prioritization shall be  
263 chosen from a preliminary selection group which shall include  
264 the list of projects maintained pursuant to paragraph (d) and  
265 the top two priorities of each state university.

266 (c) A new construction, remodeling, or renovation project  
267 that has not received an appropriation in a previous year shall  
268 not be considered for inclusion on the prioritized list required  
269 by s. 1013.64(4), unless:

270 1. A plan is provided to reserve funds in an escrow  
271 account, ~~specific to the project,~~ into which shall be deposited  
272 each year an amount of funds equal to 1 percent of the total  
273 value of the building for future maintenance;

274 2. There exists sufficient capacity within the cash and  
275 bonding estimate of funds by the Revenue Estimating Conference

276 to accommodate the project within the 3-year Public Education  
277 Capital Outlay funding cycle; and

278 3. The project has been recommended pursuant to s.  
279 1013.31.

280 Section 8. Subsection (1) of section 1001.71, Florida  
281 Statutes, is amended to read:

282 1001.71 University boards of trustees; membership.—

283 (1) Pursuant to s. 7(c), Art. IX of the State  
284 Constitution, each local constituent university shall be  
285 administered by a university board of trustees comprised of 13  
286 members as follows: 6 citizen members appointed by the Governor  
287 subject to confirmation by the Senate; 5 citizen members  
288 appointed by the Board of Governors subject to confirmation by  
289 the Senate; the chair of the faculty senate or the equivalent;  
290 and the president of the student body of the university. The  
291 appointed members shall serve staggered 5-year terms. Appointed  
292 members may be reappointed for one additional term, not to  
293 exceed 10 years of consecutive service. ~~In order to achieve~~  
294 ~~staggered terms, beginning July 1, 2003, of the initial~~  
295 ~~appointments by the Governor, 2 members shall serve 2-year~~  
296 ~~terms, 3 members shall serve 3-year terms, and 1 member shall~~  
297 ~~serve a 5-year term and of the initial appointments by the Board~~  
298 ~~of Governors, 2 members shall serve 2-year terms, 2 members~~  
299 ~~shall serve 3-year terms, and 1 member shall serve a 5-year~~  
300 ~~term. There shall be no state residency requirement for~~

301 ~~university board members, but~~ The Governor and the Board of  
 302 Governors shall consider ~~diversity and~~ regional representation  
 303 when appointing members. An appointed board member may continue  
 304 to serve until a successor is appointed. Beginning July 2, 2020,  
 305 For purposes of this subsection, regional representation shall  
 306 include the chair of a campus board established pursuant to s.  
 307 1004.341.

308 Section 9. Effective January 1, 2026, subsections (1) and  
 309 (5) of section 1004.085, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

310 1004.085 Textbook and instructional materials  
 311 affordability and transparency.-

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

313 (a) The term "Instructional materials" means educational  
 314 materials for use within a course which may be available in  
 315 printed or digital format.

316 (b) "Syllabus" or "syllabi" means the course syllabus or  
 317 syllabi developed by the instructor assigned to the course.

318 (c) "Term" includes the fall, spring, and summer terms.

319 (5) (a) Each Florida College System institution and state  
 320 university shall post prominently in the course registration  
 321 system and on its website a hyperlink to lists of required and  
 322 recommended textbooks and instructional materials, including  
 323 those that are open access or an open educational resource or  
 324 for which there is no cost, for at least 95 percent of all  
 325 courses and course sections offered at the institution during

326 the upcoming term. The lists must include the International  
327 Standard Book Number (ISBN) or a unique identifier for each  
328 required and recommended textbook and instructional material and  
329 ~~or~~ other identifying information, which must include, at a  
330 minimum, all of the following: the title, all authors listed,  
331 publishers, edition number, copyright date, published date, and  
332 other relevant information necessary to identify the specific  
333 textbooks or instructional materials required and recommended  
334 for each course. The State Board of Education and the Board of  
335 Governors shall include in the policies, procedures, and  
336 guidelines adopted under subsection (6) certain limited  
337 exceptions to this notification requirement for classes added  
338 after the notification deadline.

339 (b) The lists of required and recommended textbooks and  
340 instructional materials required in paragraph (a) must be based  
341 on a list submitted by the instructor and:

342 1. Be posted as early as is feasible but at least 45 days  
343 before the first day of class for each term.

344 2. Remain posted for at least 5 academic years.

345 3. Be searchable by the general education status, the  
346 course subject, the course section, the course number, the  
347 course title, the name of the instructor of the course, the  
348 title of each assigned textbook or instructional material, and  
349 each author of an assigned textbook or instructional material.

350 4. Include the duration of any license allowing access to

351 the textbook or instructional material.

352 5. Display corresponding retail costs, when applicable, to  
353 students to help determine the value of any bulk pricing  
354 program.

355 6.4. Be easily downloadable by current and prospective  
356 students.

357 (c) To maximize informed student choice, the current  
358 syllabus for each ~~If a~~ course subject to paragraphs (a) and (b)  
359 shall be posted prominently as a hyperlink in the course  
360 registration system. Each syllabus must contain ~~is a general~~  
361 ~~education core course option identified pursuant to s. 1007.25,~~  
362 ~~course syllabi information containing sufficient detail to~~  
363 inform students of all of the following ~~must be included:~~

364 1. The course curriculum, including the required,  
365 recommended, and supplemental textbooks and instructional  
366 materials regardless of cost or whether the materials are open  
367 access or open educational resource.

368 2. Specific ~~The~~ goals, objectives, and student  
369 expectations of the course.

370 3. How student performance will be evaluated, including  
371 the grading scale and methodology ~~measured.~~

372 Section 10. Section 1004.098, Florida Statutes, is amended  
373 to read:

374 1004.098 Applicants for president of a state university or  
375 Florida College System institution; ~~public records exemption;~~

376 ~~public meetings exemption.~~

377 (1) (a) Each state university and Florida College System  
378 institution board of trustees must adopt a presidential  
379 succession plan specifying lines of authority should the  
380 president not fulfill his or her full term as president. To  
381 promote continuity and efficiency in government, each successor  
382 identified in the plan must be a current employee of the state  
383 university or Florida College System institution.

384 (b) A state university or Florida College System  
385 institution may not appoint or select an interim president  
386 unless the appointment or selection conforms to its succession  
387 plan or the university or institution conducts a search pursuant  
388 to s. 1001.706(6) (a) or s. 1001.64(19), as applicable.

389 (2) Upon the vacancy or anticipated vacancy of the  
390 position of president, a public officer, including the Governor,  
391 or an employee of an executive branch agency, may not discuss  
392 the vacancy, an anticipated vacancy, or the process for filling  
393 such vacancy or promote or advocate for a person to be appointed  
394 as president, with a member or employee of the following:

395 (a) The Board of Governors.

396 (b) The State Board of Education.

397 (c) A state university board of trustees.

398 (d) A Florida College System institution board of  
399 trustees.

400 ~~(1) (a) Any personal identifying information of an~~

401 ~~applicant for president of a state university or a Florida~~  
402 ~~College System institution held by a state university or a~~  
403 ~~Florida College System institution is confidential and exempt~~  
404 ~~from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State~~  
405 ~~Constitution.~~

406 ~~(b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), the age, race, and~~  
407 ~~gender of all applicants who met the minimum qualifications~~  
408 ~~established for the position by a state university or Florida~~  
409 ~~College System institution who were considered and the personal~~  
410 ~~identifying information of an applicant included in the final~~  
411 ~~group of applicants for president of a state university or a~~  
412 ~~Florida College System institution are no longer confidential~~  
413 ~~and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State~~  
414 ~~Constitution beginning at the earlier of the date the final~~  
415 ~~group of applicants to be considered for president is~~  
416 ~~established or 21 days before the date of a meeting at which an~~  
417 ~~interview of an applicant will be conducted or at which final~~  
418 ~~action or a vote is to be taken on the offer of the employment~~  
419 ~~of an applicant as president.~~

420 ~~(2) (a) Any portion of a meeting held for the purpose of~~  
421 ~~identifying or vetting applicants for president of a state~~  
422 ~~university or a Florida College System institution, including~~  
423 ~~any portion of a meeting which would disclose personal~~  
424 ~~identifying information of such applicants which is otherwise~~  
425 ~~confidential and exempt under subsection (1), is exempt from s.~~

426 ~~286.011 and s. 24(b), Art. I of the State Constitution.~~

427 ~~(b) A complete recording must be made of any portion of a~~  
428 ~~meeting which is closed pursuant to paragraph (a), and any~~  
429 ~~closed portion of such meeting may not be held off the record.~~  
430 ~~The recording of the closed portion of a meeting is exempt from~~  
431 ~~s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution.~~

432 ~~(c) The exemption provided in paragraph (a) does not apply~~  
433 ~~to:~~

434 ~~1. Any portion of a meeting held for the purpose of~~  
435 ~~establishing qualifications for the position or establishing any~~  
436 ~~compensation framework to be offered to an applicant for~~  
437 ~~president of a state university or a Florida College System~~  
438 ~~institution.~~

439 ~~2. Any meeting that is held after a final group of~~  
440 ~~applicants for president of a state university or a Florida~~  
441 ~~College System institution has been established.~~

442 ~~(3) This section is subject to the Open Government Sunset~~  
443 ~~Review Act in accordance with s. 119.15 and shall stand repealed~~  
444 ~~on October 2, 2027, unless reviewed and saved from repeal~~  
445 ~~through reenactment by the Legislature.~~

446 Section 11. Section 1004.89, Florida Statutes, is amended  
447 to read:

448 1004.89 Institute for Freedom in the Americas.—

449 ~~(1)~~ The Institute for Freedom in the Americas is hereby  
450 created at Miami Dade College to preserve the ideals of a free

451 society and promote democracy in the Americas. The institute  
452 shall be located at the Freedom Tower and shall:

453 (1)~~(a)~~ ~~Partner with the Adam Smith Center for Economic~~  
454 ~~Freedom to~~ Hold workshops, symposiums, and conferences that  
455 provide networking opportunities for leaders throughout the  
456 region to gain new insights and ideas for promoting democracy,  
457 including knowledge of and insight into the intellectual,  
458 political, and economic freedoms that are foundational to a  
459 democratic society.

460 (2)~~(b)~~ Enter into an agreement with the Adam Smith Center  
461 for Economic Freedom to provide participants with academic  
462 coursework and programs that advance democratic practices and  
463 economic and legal reforms.

464 (3)~~(c)~~ Provide educational and experiential opportunities  
465 for regional leaders committed to careers in democracy and  
466 governance.

467 ~~(2) Miami Dade College, in accordance with s. 1004.70,~~  
468 ~~shall approve a direct-support organization to support the~~  
469 ~~institute in its mission to develop partnerships throughout the~~  
470 ~~Americas. Notwithstanding s. 1004.70(2), the board of the~~  
471 ~~direct-support organization shall be composed of five members,~~  
472 ~~as follows: one member appointed by the President of the Senate;~~  
473 ~~one member appointed by the Speaker of the House of~~  
474 ~~Representatives; and three members appointed by the Governor,~~  
475 ~~including a representative from Miami Dade College and a~~

476 ~~representative from the Adam Smith Center for Economic Freedom.~~

477 Section 12. Subsection (15) is added to section 1007.25,  
478 Florida Statutes, to read:

479 1007.25 General education courses; common prerequisites;  
480 other degree requirements.—

481 (15) A Florida College System institution or state  
482 university may not impose an institutionwide or universitywide  
483 graduation requirement that includes a course in conflict with  
484 paragraph (3) (c).

485 Section 13. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this  
486 act and except for this section, which shall take effect upon  
487 becoming a law, this act shall take effect July 1, 2025.