

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 3—Committee on Finance

FILE NUMBER.....

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION—Urging the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada, the Department of Education and the school districts to take certain actions that are necessary to facilitate the sharing of certain information to improve the system of public education in this state.

WHEREAS, The education of the children of this state and our nation is a primary concern of the residents of this state and of the United States; and

WHEREAS, During the past 2 years, this state has developed and enacted sweeping reforms in the system of public education to improve the academic achievement of students, including, without limitation, rigorous academic standards of content and performance; and

WHEREAS, The rigorous new academic standards of content and performance and other reforms made to the system of public education in this state demand a high level of academic performance by both students and teachers; and

WHEREAS, The Education Trust is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to encourage collaboration among schools, colleges and universities to promote the common goal of providing a quality system of education; and

WHEREAS, The Education Trust encourages universities and school districts to offer constructive feedback to each other, to make joint decisions about the academic qualifications of new teachers and to establish academic standards for persons who desire to enter into the teaching profession that are aligned to the academic standards established for the pupils in public schools; and

WHEREAS, The Council to Establish Academic Standards for public schools in this state has concluded that teaching children in elementary school how to read is the highest educational priority of this state; and

WHEREAS, There is evidence that across the nation and in this state, persons who are enrolled in educational programs for entry into the teaching profession do not receive sufficient training in teaching children how to read and how to apply basic mathematical principles of computation; and

WHEREAS, As part of the reform made to the system of public education in this state, each year the school districts of this state are required, pursuant to NRS 385.347, to report the percentage of students who graduate from high school and who subsequently enroll in remedial courses in reading, writing or mathematics at a university or community college within the University and Community College System of Nevada; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to NRS 396.548, the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada requires employees of the University and Community College System of Nevada to provide to the board of trustees of each school district of this state information regarding:

1. The number of pupils who graduated from a high school in the district in the immediately preceding year and enrolled in remedial courses in reading, writing or mathematics; and

2. Any costs incurred by the University and Community College System of Nevada to provide such remedial instruction; and

WHEREAS, The University and Community College System of Nevada reported that for the summer and fall of 1997, more than 1,187 students who graduated from high schools within this state were required to complete remedial programs in mathematics or English, or both subjects, and the cost of providing such remedial instruction was approximately \$414,000; and

WHEREAS, Further collaboration between the University and Community College System of Nevada and the school districts of this state that will increase the flow of information concerning the progress of students in meeting the new academic standards and teachers in teaching the new academic standards is essential to foster the success of the reforms made to the system of public education in this state; and

WHEREAS, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, is a Federal Law that is designed to protect the privacy of the educational records of students in elementary, secondary and postsecondary schools; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, postsecondary educational institutions may not release information that reveals personal information about the student without the consent of the student; and

WHEREAS, The ability of school districts to acquire accurate and detailed information about the academic readiness of freshmen at the community colleges and universities of the University and Community College System of Nevada who recently graduated from high schools in this state is crucial for the school districts to tailor their academic programs so that future students are prepared for the challenges of postsecondary education; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, THE ASSEMBLY CONCURRING, That the members of the 70th session of the Nevada Legislature urge the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to ensure that the universities and community colleges within the University and Community College System of Nevada obtain, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the consent of students as is necessary for the universities and community colleges to provide the school districts of this state with more detailed information about the academic readiness of freshmen and the academic deficiencies of students in mathematics, English and science; and be it further

RESOLVED, That as part of the collaboration between the University and Community College System of Nevada and the school districts of this state, the members of the 70th session of the Nevada Legislature urge the school districts to provide constructive feedback to the colleges of education of the

University and Community College System of Nevada concerning the strengths and areas for improvement of teachers who are trained in such colleges in teaching students the rigorous new academic standards adopted for this state; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Department of Education shall provide assistance to the collaboration by means of the statewide automated system of information concerning pupils that is maintained by the Department or by means of other sources of information concerning pupils maintained by the Department; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Department of Education, in cooperation with the University and Community College System of Nevada, shall study the effectiveness of the collaboration between the University and Community College System of Nevada and the school districts of this state and submit a report of the results of its study and any recommendations for legislation to the members of the 71st session of the Nevada Legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada, the board of trustees of each school district in this state and the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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