

SENATE BILL NO. 449—COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

MARCH 28, 2011

Referred to Committee on Education

SUMMARY—Revises provisions governing tuition charges, registration fees and other fees assessed against students in the Nevada System of Higher Education. (BDR 34-932)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to the Nevada System of Higher Education; authorizing the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to fix tuition charges and assess registration fees and other fees based on the demand for or the costs of providing the academic program or major for which the tuition charges are fixed or the registration fees are assessed; requiring the Board of Regents to establish a program authorizing scholarships and reduced fees for students who are economically disadvantaged under certain circumstances; requiring the Board of Regents to make certain reports to the Legislature; requiring the Director of the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation to provide certain information on employment and wages to the Board of Regents for purposes of the report made by the Board of Regents; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

1 Existing law authorizes the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to fix
2 tuition charges for students at all campuses of the Nevada System of Higher
3 Education. The tuition charges are in addition to any registration fees or other fees
4 assessed against a student. (NRS 396.540) **Section 2** of this bill authorizes the
5 Board of Regents, in fixing tuition charges and assessing registration fees and other
6 fees, to adjust the amount of the tuition charges and registration and other fees
7 based on the demand for or the costs of carrying out the academic program or major
8 for which the tuition charges or registration or other fees are assessed. The



adjustment may be based on factors such as the cost of professional instruction, the cost of laboratory resources and ancillary costs. **Section 2** also provides that if the Board of Regents adjusts the amount of tuition charges, registration fees or other fees based on the demand for or the cost of an academic program or major, the Board is required to establish a program to authorize scholarships and reduced fees for students who are economically disadvantaged and who are enrolled in academic programs or majors which are more costly as a result of the adjustments authorized by this bill. Finally, **section 2** requires the Board of Regents to submit an annual report to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the Legislature, or to the Legislative Commission if the Legislature is not in session, which identifies the demand for and the costs of each academic program and major and includes a schedule of all tuition charges, registration fees and other fees assessed for each academic program and major.

Section 3 of this bill requires the Board of Regents to submit a biennial report to the Legislature including certain information on: (1) the number and percentage of students who complete academic programs at an institution within the System with a degree or certificate and a comparison with national statistics; (2) initiatives undertaken by the Board of Regents to increase the rate of students who complete academic programs with a degree or certificate; (3) the employment rate of students who complete a degree or certificate program and obtain employment in this State and the average starting salary; and (4) initiatives undertaken by the Board of Regents to align the degree and certificate programs offered by institutions within the System with the economic development goals identified by the Commission on Economic Development.

Existing law creates the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, provides for a Director of the Department and imposes certain duties on the Director. (NRS 232.910, 232.920) **Section 3.5** of this bill requires the Director to provide certain employment and wage information to the Board of Regents for purposes of the report required of the Board of Regents by **section 3** of this bill.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 396 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 and 3 of this act.

Sec. 2. 1. *In fixing a tuition charge for students at any campus of the System as provided by NRS 396.540 and in setting the amount of registration fees and other fees which are assessed against students, the Board of Regents may provide for the adjustment of the amount of the tuition charge or registration fee or other fee based on the demand for or the costs of carrying out the academic program or major for which the tuition charge, registration fee or other fee is assessed, including, without limitation, the costs of professional instruction, laboratory resources and other ancillary support.*

2. *If the Board of Regents provides for the adjustment of tuition charges, registration fees or other fees in the manner authorized by subsection 1, the Board of Regents shall establish a program to authorize scholarships and reduced fees for students*



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1 *who are economically disadvantaged and who are enrolled in*
2 *academic programs or majors for which the adjustment of tuition*
3 *charges, registration fees or other fees in the manner authorized*
4 *by subsection 1 results in an increase in the costs of enrollment in*
5 *such programs or majors.*

6 *3. If the Board of Regents provides for the adjustment of*
7 *tuition charges, registration fees or other fees in the manner*
8 *authorized by subsection 1, the Board of Regents shall, on or*
9 *before February 1 of each year, submit a written report to the*
10 *Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the*
11 *Legislature, or to the Legislative Commission if the Legislature is*
12 *not in session, which must, without limitation:*

13 *(a) Identify the demand for each academic program and*
14 *major;*

15 *(b) Identify the costs of providing each academic program and*
16 *major; and*

17 *(c) Include a schedule of all tuition charges, registration fees*
18 *and other fees assessed for each academic program and major.*

19 *4. As used in this section, "tuition charge" has the meaning*
20 *ascribed to it in NRS 396.540.*

21 **Sec. 3.** *The Board of Regents shall, on or before February 1*
22 *of each odd-numbered year submit a written report to the Director*
23 *of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the next*
24 *regular session of the Legislature which includes:*

25 *1. By institution within the System and by each academic*
26 *program at the institution:*

27 *(a) The number of students who enter the academic program;*

28 *(b) The percentage of students who complete the academic*
29 *program; and*

30 *(c) The average length of time for completion of the academic*
31 *program to obtain a degree or certificate.*

32 *2. A comparison of the data which is reported pursuant to*
33 *subsection 1 with available national metrics measuring how states*
34 *throughout the country rank in the completion of academic*
35 *programs leading to a degree or certificate and the average time*
36 *for completion of those programs.*

37 *3. Initiatives undertaken by the Board of Regents to increase*
38 *the rate of students who complete degree and certificate programs,*
39 *including initiatives to shorten the time to complete those*
40 *programs.*

41 *4. The number and percentage of students who have obtained*
42 *employment within their field of study in this State, and the*
43 *average starting salary, which must be reported by institution*
44 *within the System and by each academic program at the*
45 *institution. The data must be:*



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(a) Matched with industries identified in state economic development goals to determine whether students who graduated and obtained a degree or certificate are finding employment in those industries in this State; and

(b) Based upon the employment and wage information provided by the Director of the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation pursuant to NRS 232.920.

5. Initiatives undertaken by the Board of Regents to align the degree and certificate programs offered by the institutions within the System with the economic development goals identified by the Commission on Economic Development.

Sec. 3.5. NRS 232.920 is hereby amended to read as follows:
232.920 The Director:

1. Shall:

(a) Organize the Department into divisions and other operating units as needed to achieve the purposes of the Department;

(b) Upon request, provide the Director of the Department of Administration with a list of organizations and agencies in this State whose primary purpose is the training and employment of persons with disabilities; ~~and~~

(c) Except as otherwise provided by a specific statute, direct the divisions to share information in their records with agencies of local governments which are responsible for the collection of debts or obligations if the confidentiality of the information is otherwise maintained under the terms and conditions required by law ~~H~~; and

(d) Provide the employment and wage information to the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada for purposes of the reporting required of the Board of Regents by subsection 4 of section 3 of this act.

2. Is responsible for the administration, through the divisions of the Department, of the provisions of NRS 426.010 to 426.720, inclusive, 426.740, 426.790 and 426.800, and chapters 612 and 615 of NRS, and all other provisions of law relating to the functions of the Department and its divisions, but is not responsible for the professional line activities of the divisions or other operating units except as otherwise provided by specific statute.

3. May employ, within the limits of legislative appropriations, such staff as is necessary for the performance of the duties of the Department.

Sec. 4. This act becomes effective on July 1, 2011.

