

Committee Action:
Do Pass _____
Amend & Do Pass _____
Other _____

Senate Committee on Education

This measure may be considered for action during today's work session.

SENATE BILL 347

Revises provisions relating to higher education. (BDR 34-119)

Sponsored By: Senator Doñate and Assemblyman Watts
Date Heard: April 12, 2023
Fiscal Notes: Effect on Local Government: May Have Fiscal Impact.
Effect on the State: Yes.

Senate Bill 347, as introduced, deconsolidates the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) and separates the University of Nevada from the System. It also establishes the composition of the University of Nevada and the System. The bill revises provisions relating to the duties and responsibilities of certain officers within the University and the System.

The bill creates a board of trustees for each state college and community college and creates the Nevada Office of Higher Education Administrative Services. Additionally, SB 347 provides for the appointment of the Director and employees of the Office and each board of trustees. It further establishes the powers and duties of each board and revises the powers and duties of the Board of Regents of the University.

Amendments:

Senator Doñate proposed an amendment (attached) which:

1. Deletes the bill as introduced, except for Section 45, which addresses the responsibilities and general oversight among Nevada's higher education institutions;
2. Establishes the Commission on Higher Education Funding;
3. Establishes the qualifications for the appointed members;
4. Establishes the duties of the Commission; and
5. Provides funding and 2 bill draft requests to support the Commission's work.

SB 347 Conceptual Amendment 2.0

1. Delete SB 347 as introduced except for Section 45.
2. Establish the Commission on Higher Education Funding consisting of 12 members:
 - One member appointed by the Governor, who serves as Chair.
 - Two members appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate.
 - Two members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.
 - One representative from each doctoral university defined in Section 45.
 - One representative from the master's college institution defined in Section 45.
 - One representative from the baccalaureate college institution defined in Section 45.
 - One representative from each of the baccalaureate and associate's college institutions defined in Section 45.
3. Establish the qualifications for members appointed by the Governor, Senate Majority Leader, and Speaker of the Assembly.
 - Be a resident of Nevada.
 - Not have been registered as a lobbyist, an employee of the state, or an elected official for at least 2 years immediately preceding appointment to the Commission.
 - Have relevant experience in higher education and/or economics, public finance, or a related discipline and be able to bring knowledge and professional judgment to the deliberations of the Commission.
 - Have the education, experience and skills necessary to effectively execute the duties and responsibilities of a member of the Commission.
4. Duties of the Commission on Higher Education Funding
 - Evaluate higher education funding models used in other states to support institutions similar to those defined in Section 45.
 - Conduct a cost analysis of the delivery of higher education services that support the missions of the institutions defined in Section 45 that includes but is not limited to:
 - The scale of each institution's service area.
 - The size and compensation of each institution's teaching and administrative faculty.
 - The share of each institution's in-state, first-generation, and Pell grant eligible student populations and the support services needed to ensure student educational success.
 - The delivery of education services to support each institution's workforce certification, lower and upper division undergraduate curriculum, and graduate-curriculum.

- Develop mechanisms for the appropriation of state funding to implement the recommended funding for each institution as determined by the cost analysis.

5. Resources allocated to the Commission on Higher Education

- Funding to retain the services of professional consultants and staff to assist the committee in its work.
- 2 bill draft requests to be submitted to the Legislative Counsel Bureau by December 31, 2024 to implement the committee's recommendation during the 2025 session of the Nevada Legislature.