

HS HB 297 -- PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (Wallingford)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Higher Education

SOUTHEAST STATEWIDE MISSION (Sections 174.281 & 174.453 RSMo.)

This bill designates Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) as an institution with a statewide mission in visual and performing arts, computer science, and cybersecurity.

The bill modifies provisions relating to the Board of Governors for SEMO as outlined in the bill.

STUDENT RIGHT TO KNOW ACT (Sections 161.625 & 173.035)

The bill creates the "Students' Right to Know Act", which, beginning January 1, 2022, requires the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD) to annually collect and compile specified information to help high school students make more informed decisions about their futures and ensure they are adequately aware of the costs of four-year college and alternative career paths. The document must be available to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for distribution to public school guidance counselors by October 15th each year. The information provided by the public institutions is also required to be available on the website of the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development.

MISSOURI EDUCATION PROGRAM (Sections 166.400-166.440, 166.456, 166.461, 166.502, and 209.610)

This bill changes the name of the "Missouri Education Savings Program" to the "Missouri Education Program".

This bill provides to parents of any "qualified children", as defined in the bill as; born or adopted after January 1, 2021 and a Missouri resident at time of birth, and at the time of grant application, a scholarship grant of \$100 in a savings account established under Sections 166.400 to 166.456, RSMo known as the "Missouri Education Savings Program".

The bill establishes the "Show Me Child Development Account Program" (MCSAP) and creates the "Missouri Children's Development Account Program Fund". The fund shall receive from the State Treasurer a portion of the interest derived from the investment of funds as outlined in the bill not to exceed .35% of the total of the average daily fund balance in the State Treasury.

The Department of Health and Senior Services will notify the

Treasurer's office upon certification of live birth in the state and provide relevant information as outlined. The Treasurer's office will notify parents about this program and provide opportunity for the parent to exclude any child.

The bill allows the State Treasurer to receive contributions from any person or legal entity on behalf of, and make grants to, eligible children to pay for qualified higher education expenses.

The Treasurer shall establish a separate savings account for each qualified child under this bill and shall deposit scholarship seed money, contributions, and interest earnings as specified. Any amount in such a savings account that is not expended for qualified higher education expenses by the qualified child's 30th birthday will revert back to the Program Fund.

The Fund shall receive a portion of the interest derived from the investment of funds as outlined in the bill. Moneys in the Fund shall be used to provide scholarship seed money and to pay for personal service, equipment, and other expenses of the Treasurer related to administration.

REDUCED RESTRICTION ON DEALING IN REAL PROPERTY (Section 172.020)

The bill will allow universities to subdivide, sell, or convey title to land located within a university campus.

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY (Sections 174.283 & 174.450)

The bill designates Northwest Missouri State University as an institution with a statewide mission in educator preparation, emergency and disaster management, and profession-based learning. Current law provides that public institutions of higher education charged with a statewide mission shall be governed by a board of governors as described in current law. Under this bill, Northwest Missouri State University shall continue to be governed by its board of regents.

REMOVING TUITION CAP RESTRICTION (Section 173.1003)

The bill will allow community colleges and public universities to exceed the percentage change limitations for tuition currently established in Section 173.1003, RSMo., after July 1, 2022. The bill requires public institutions that utilize differentiated tuition to notify the DHEWD and to no longer utilize required course fees.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSE CREDIT (Section 173.1352)

The bill requires public institutions of higher learning to adopt and implement policies, as outlined in the bill, that will give undergraduate course credit to entering freshman students for each advanced placement (AP) examination upon which such student achieves a score of three or higher. The Coordinating Board for Higher Education will consult with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to identify correlations between subject matter and content in courses and examinations in the AP program, and shall make that information public on the Board's website.

This bill includes similar language as found in HB 2151 (2020), HB 355 (2021), HCS for HB 627 (2021), HB 908 (2021) HCS for HB 856 (2021) and HB 1208 (2021) .