Session of 2025

HOUSE BILL No. 2402

By Committee on Appropriations

Requested by Representative Rahjes

3-6

AN ACT concerning education; creating the blue ribbon commission on higher education; establishing the membership and purpose of the commission; requiring the submission of preliminary and final reports to the legislature on the commission's findings and recommendations.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section 1. (a) There is hereby established the blue ribbon commission on higher education. The purpose of the commission shall be to study, discuss and make recommendations on higher education in the state of Kansas.

(b) The commission shall consist of 17 members as follows:

(1) One member appointed by the chairperson of the state board of regents;

(2) one member appointed by the governor;

(3) one member of the majority party of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(4) one member of the majority party of the house of representatives appointed by the majority leader of the house of representatives;

(5) one member of the minority party of the house of representatives appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives;

(6) one member of the majority party of the senate appointed by the president of the senate;

(7) one member of the majority party of the senate appointed by the majority leader of the senate;

(8) one member of the minority party of the senate appointed by the minority leader of the senate;

(9) one member to represent the regional universities jointly appointed by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives;

(10) one member to represent the big three universities jointly appointed by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives;

(11) one member appointed by the Kansas association of technical colleges;

(12) one member appointed by the Kansas association of community

colleges;

(13) one member who is a student attending a postsecondary educational institution appointed by the speaker pro tem of the house of representatives;

(14) one member who is the parent of a student attending a postsecondary educational institution appointed by the vice president of the senate;

(15) one member who is a higher education expert jointly appointed by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives;

(16) one member of the public appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(17) one member of the public appointed by the president of the senate.

(c) The term of members of the commission shall expire on January 1, 2027. Any vacancy in members of the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The chairperson of the commission shall be jointly appointed by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives.

(d) The commission may meet at any time, at any place within the state and through any means upon call of the chairperson. All actions taken by the commission shall be made by motion and adopted by a majority of those present when there is a quorum. A quorum of the commission is 9 members.

(e) Members of the commission attending meetings authorized by the commission shall be paid amounts for expenses, mileage and subsistence as provided in K.S.A. 75-3223(e), and amendments thereto, by the state board of regents.

(f) The commission shall study, discuss and make recommendations on the following:

(1) Long-term goals and priorities for higher education;

(2) governing structure, financing, cost, savings and consolidation of state board of regents schools, community colleges and technical colleges;

(3) accessibility and affordability of higher education;

(4) strengths and weaknesses of higher education and postsecondary educational institutions;

(5) strategies for enrollment and degree completion; and

(6) strategies for right-sizing and streamlining higher education for the future with a student focus.

(g) (1) On or before January 1, 2026, the commission shall submit to the legislature a preliminary report on the commission's findings and recommendations for higher education in the state of Kansas.

(2) On or before January 1, 2027, the commission shall submit to the

legislature a final report on the commission's findings and recommendations for higher education in the state of Kansas.

(h) The staff of the state board of regents, office of revisor of statutes, the legislative research department and the division of legislative administrative services shall provide assistance as may be requested by the commission.

(i) As used in this section, "postsecondary educational institution" means any public university, municipal university, community college, technical college and institute of technology.

Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the statute book.