

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION**

2 **ACCREDITATION**

3 2023 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Douglas R. Welton**

6 Senate Sponsor: Lincoln Fillmore

8 **LONG TITLE**

9 **General Description:**

10 This resolution calls on the federal government to return full oversight of the
11 accreditation process for public higher education institutions to the states.

12 **Highlighted Provisions:**

13 This resolution:

- 14 ▶ declares that oversight of accreditation for institutions of higher education should be
- 15 solely under the purview of states; and
- 16 ▶ calls on the federal government to return that responsibility to the states.

17 **Special Clauses:**

18 None

20 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

21 WHEREAS, education is a state level issue and each state should have full control over
22 the state's public systems of education, including higher education;

23 WHEREAS, because of undue federal oversight, Utah currently lacks full control over
24 the accreditation process for public institutions of higher education in the state;

25 WHEREAS, accreditation is a review process for higher education institutions and
26 specific programs, and institutions and programs may request an accreditation review from
27 accrediting bodies, which are private educational associations;



28 WHEREAS, accrediting bodies develop evaluation criteria and grant accreditation to
29 the institutions and programs that meet the accrediting bodies' criteria;

30 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Education (USDE) does not accredit
31 individual institutions, but approves accrediting agencies that meet USDE's criteria;

32 WHEREAS, to receive federal student aid, students must attend an institution
33 accredited by an agency approved by USDE, and institutions must be accredited by an agency
34 approved by USDE to receive federal assistance, including research grants;

35 WHEREAS, all of Utah's public institutions of higher education are accredited by
36 federally-approved accrediting bodies;

37 WHEREAS, accreditation of higher education institutions is a state issue and should be
38 under full purview of each state;

39 WHEREAS, states that fully oversee the accreditation process for public higher
40 education institutions should have access to federal funding, including federal student aid and
41 research grants; and

42 WHEREAS, the federal government's mandate that public higher education institutions
43 go through an accreditation process dictated by USDE to receive federal funding is an affront
44 to state's rights:

45 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
46 declares that all states, including the state of Utah, should have the ability to fully oversee the
47 accreditation process for public institutions of higher education in each state without federal
48 oversight or interference while maintaining access to federal funds.

49 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature calls on the federal government to
50 recognize each state's rights and return full control of the accreditation process for public
51 higher education institutions to the states.