

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION**

2 **ACCREDITATION**

3 2024 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

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

6 Senate Sponsor: _____

7

LONG TITLE

8 **General Description:**

9
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

19

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

20 WHEREAS, education is a state level issue, and each state should have full control
21 over its public education systems, including higher education;

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

24 WHEREAS, accreditation is a review process for higher education institutions and
25 specific programs within an institution;

26 WHEREAS, higher education institutions and programs may request an accreditation
27



28 review from accrediting bodies, which are private educational associations;

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

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

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

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

39 WHEREAS, accreditation of higher education institutions is a state issue and should be
40 under the full purview of each individual state;

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

44 WHEREAS, the federal government's mandate that public higher education institutions
45 comply with an accreditation process dictated by USDE to receive federal funding is an affront
46 to states' rights:

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

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