

HJR003S01 compared with HJR003

~~{deleted text}~~ shows text that was in HJR003 but was deleted in HJR003S01.

inserted text shows text that was not in HJR003 but was inserted into HJR003S01.

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Representative Douglas R. Welton proposes the following substitute bill:

JOINT RESOLUTION REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION

ACCREDITATION

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: ~~{}~~ Douglas R. Welton

Senate Sponsor: ~~{}~~ _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution calls on the federal government to return full oversight of the accreditation process for public higher education institutions to the states and directs the commissioner of higher education to form a working group to review the feasibility of using alternative accreditation options for Utah's institutions of higher education.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ declares that oversight of accreditation for institutions of higher education should be solely under the purview of states; ~~{and}~~
- ▶ calls on the federal government to return that responsibility to the states ~~{}~~; and

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- ▶ directs the commissioner of higher education to form a working group to review the feasibility of using alternative accreditation options for Utah's institutions of higher education.

Special Clauses:

None

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, higher education institutions and programs may request an accreditation review from accrediting bodies, which are private educational associations;

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Utah should seek out alternative accreditation options for the state's institutions of higher education, including potentially assuming a state-led accreditation process;

WHEREAS, states that fully oversee the accreditation process for public higher

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education institutions should have access to federal funding, including federal student aid and research grants; and

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

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

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourages the commissioner of higher education to form a working group during the 2024 interim, including staff from the Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, to examine the feasibility of alternative accreditation options, including state-level accreditation, for Utah's eight public colleges and universities and eight technical colleges.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourages the working group review includes the cost of alternative accreditations for the state and degree recognition outside of the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourages the working group to report to the Education Interim Committee at or before the committee's October 2024 meeting.