

Amendment to HB 2-FN-A-LOCAL

1 Amend the bill by replacing sections 116-120 with the following:

2

3 116 New Chapter; New Hampshire Higher Education Merger Assessment Commission  
4 (HEMAC). Amend RSA by inserting after chapter 188-H the following new chapter:

5

CHAPTER 188-I

6

NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGHER EDUCATION MERGER ASSESSMENT COMMISSION (HEMAC)

7 188-I:1 Findings. The general court finds that affordable access to public higher education at all  
8 levels is essential to the health, welfare, and security of all New Hampshire citizens and to the  
9 future vitality of the state. To be effective, public higher education must respond to the changing  
10 needs and interests of citizens and employers while ensuring those services remain affordable and  
11 accessible. The exploration of a single, well-coordinated system of public higher education at all  
12 levels, pursuing the unique and diverse missions of its member institutions, offering seamless access  
13 to and between all levels of higher education, adapting to the rapidly evolving challenges facing all of  
14 higher education, and governed by a unified board of trustees, may be an efficient and effective  
15 means for meeting the needs of the citizens and the state.

16 188-I:2 Purpose. The commission is established to explore, study, and assess the potential for  
17 establishing a collaborative and strategic merging of the university system of New Hampshire,  
18 established in RSA 187-A, and the community college system of New Hampshire, established in RSA  
19 188-F. The goal of the commission shall be to determine if a unified system of public higher  
20 education is, in all respects, beneficial to the citizens of New Hampshire, and if so, to recommend  
21 legislation to provide for the implementation of a coordinated, comprehensive system of public  
22 higher education.

23 188-I:3 Membership.

24 I. The membership of the commission shall be as follows:

25 (a) Four members appointed by the university system of New Hampshire, one of whom  
26 shall be the chairperson of the board of trustees and one of whom shall be the chief executive or chief  
27 administrator. The additional 2 members shall be selected by the board of trustees.

28 (b) Four members of the community college system of New Hampshire, one of whom  
29 shall be the chairperson of the board of trustees and one of whom shall be the chief executive or chief  
30 administrator. The additional 2 members shall be selected by the board of trustees.

31 (c) Three members appointed by the governor.

32 II Any vacancy in membership shall be filled in the same manner as the commission

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1 membership originally established.

2 188-I:4 Operation of the Commission.

3 I. The commission shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson upon its initial formation.

4 II. Seven members of the commission shall constitute a quorum.

5 III. The commission shall meet at such times and places as it may determine. The  
6 chairperson shall call special meetings upon the written request of any 3 commission members or  
7 upon the chairperson's motion.

8 IV. Members shall receive no compensation for their services but shall be reimbursed for  
9 expenses reasonably incurred by them in the performance of their duties. Legislative members shall  
10 receive mileage at the legislative rate for attending to the duties of the commission.

11 188-I:5 Duties of the Commission.

12 I. On or before January 1, 2022, the commission shall recommend legislation, if determined  
13 both prudent and necessary, that would result in the merging of the community college system and  
14 the university system into a single entity called the "New Hampshire college and university system,"  
15 to be effective no later than July 1, 2023. In the development of the proposed legislation, the  
16 commission shall address and consider issues including, but not limited to, the following:

17 (a) Changes to the governance structure of public higher education in New Hampshire.

18 (b) Changes to state laws to improve the systems' efficiency and effectiveness.

19 (c) Development of a reasonable time line for implementation of a merged system.

20 (d) Potential synergies and reduction of unnecessary duplication of programs between  
21 the systems.

22 (e) Opportunities for sharing best practices and individual efficiencies, building cross-  
23 system economies of scale and sharing of resources.

24 (f) College affordability.

25 (g) Collaborative strategies to attract and retain greater proportions of New Hampshire  
26 high school graduates entering the systems.

27 (h) In consultation with the commissioner of the department of education, investigating  
28 and pursuing opportunities for collaboration and student pathways for New Hampshire high school  
29 students.

30 (i) Financial and social impacts of the merging of disparate collective bargaining  
31 agreements.

32 (j) Preserving the unique character and educational missions of 2 systems in a merged  
33 system.

34 (k) Ensuring that a merged system will not result in the elimination of physical  
35 education locations in any one part of the state.

36 (l) Minimizing or eliminating barriers to student transfer between the systems.

37 (m) The contents and recommendations of the "Final Report of the Study Group for Post-

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1 Secondary Education” dated March 19, 2021.

2 (n) Other issues the commission identifies as pertinent to its duties.

3 II. The commission shall use such funds as appropriated to hire necessary consultants as  
4 deemed necessary by the commission.

5 III. The commission shall serve as the search committee to select a chancellor once  
6 legislation has been submitted, should the commission recommend a single chancellor.

7 188-I:6 Reporting. The commission shall submit interim monthly reports to the public higher  
8 education study committee established in RSA 187-A:28-a, the governor, and the chancellors of the  
9 university system of New Hampshire and the community college system of New Hampshire, and  
10 shall submit a final report by August 31, 2022. Additional copies shall be delivered, on a monthly  
11 basis, to the fiscal committee of the general court, the house education committee, and the senate  
12 education committee.

13 117 Appropriation. There is hereby appropriated the sum of \$1,500,000 for the biennium ending  
14 June 30, 2023 to the New Hampshire higher education merger assessment commission established  
15 in RSA 188-I for the purposes established in RSA 188-I. The appropriation shall be nonlapsing for  
16 the biennium. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sum out of any money in the  
17 treasury not otherwise appropriated.

18 118 Repeal. RSA 188-I, relative to the New Hampshire higher education merger assessment  
19 commission, is repealed.

20 119 Effective Date.

21 I. Section 118 of this act shall take effect August 31, 2022.

22 II. The remainder of this act shall take effect upon its passage.

2021-0986h

AMENDED ANALYSIS

Replace 50: Establishes the New Hampshire higher education merger assessment commission.

UNAPPROVED