

HOUSE SUMMARY OF SENATE AMENDMENTS

HB 196

2022 Regular Session

Nelson

HIGHER EDUCATION: Creates the Stimulating More Advanced Research and Technology (SMART) Program and the SMART Fund for the purpose of awarding grants to support research at public postsecondary education institutions

Synopsis of Senate Amendments

1. Limit proposed law grant funding to public institutions by removing the eligibility of members of La. Assoc. of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU).
2. Remove provisions relative to the state treasurer's transfer of money into the fund.
3. Lower maximum percentage of funding the Board of Regents may retain for administrative costs from 3% to 1.5%.
4. Revises effectiveness provisions to provide for effectiveness upon signature of the governor instead of upon legislative appropriation.

Digest of Bill as Finally Passed by Senate

Proposed law establishes the SMART Program for the purpose of awarding grants to support research in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) at public postsecondary education institutions. Provides for program administration by the Bd. of Regents. Proposed law further:

- (1) Provides that grants shall be used for the following purposes:
 - (a) Matching research grants from federal agencies and other sources.
 - (b) Awarding hiring bonuses and startup packages for the purpose of attracting faculty.
 - (c) Construction, improvement, or procurement of research facilities, laboratories, equipment, or supplies.
 - (d) Scholarships and stipends for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.
- (2) Requires the board, as funding allows, to award grants on a competitive basis among the four categories above with a preference for those purposes related to research that has the opportunity for commercialization.
- (3) Requires at least 20% of the total amount of the grants to be awarded to institutions outside of the Baton Rouge and New Orleans metro regions.
- (4) Requires the percentage of all grant amounts in a year that is awarded to historically black colleges and universities be approximately equal to the percentage of all students enrolled in post secondary education institutions who are enrolled at historically black colleges and universities.

Proposed law creates the SMART Fund within the state treasury for the purpose of providing funding for the SMART program; provides that monies in the fund are subject to legislative appropriation and shall be available exclusively for use by the Bd. of Regents for the SMART program. Prohibits the board from using more than 1.5% of program funding for administrative costs.

Proposed law requires the board to submit a written report containing a return on investment analysis to the House and Senate education committees, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the Senate Committee on Finance not later than Jan. 31st annually and to adopt rules and regulations for the implementation of proposed law.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:3138.10)