

HCS SS SB 150 -- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

SPONSOR: Carter

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development by a vote of 10 to 1 with 1 voting present. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 7 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for SB 150.

CAREER-TECH CERTIFICATE PROGRAM (Section 173.836)

Beginning with the 2026-27 academic year, this bill creates the "Career-Tech Certificate (CTC) Program" and the "Career-Tech Certificate (CTC) Program Fund".

This Program is for students who have met the GPA, attendance, and service requirements for the A+ Program and are eligible for reimbursement of tuition, books, and fees, and are attending an approved institution of postsecondary education, as defined in the bill, for an eligible program of study or specified training program.

The bill provides reimbursement for students for one certificate program or completion of a program of study or until a student has completed 150% of the time usually required to complete such a program.

INSTITUTIONAL DOCTORAL PROGRAM EXPANSION (Sections 172.280 & 174.160)

Currently only the University of Missouri may offer research doctorates, doctor of philosophy degrees or specific first-professional degrees. This bill allows the Missouri State University to have the power to grant philosophy degrees in disciplines other than engineering and a bachelor of science degree in veterinary technology.

STEM GRANT (Section 173.685)

Subject to appropriation, this bill directs the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD) to make available a STEM grant for up \$1500 a semester with a maximum grant of \$6000 to eligible recipients. Eligibility for a STEM grant is outlined in the bill, and includes financial considerations similar to the Missouri Access Program under Sections 173.1101 to 173.1107, RSMo.

Recipients must also be working toward a STEM degree, which includes science, technology, engineering, or mathematics fields as specified in the bill.

Specific requirements for STEM grant renewal are also provided and include satisfactory academic progress, five or less semesters at a two-year institution, or no more than 10 semesters at an approved four-year institution, or a combination of the two.

These provisions sunset six years after the effective date.

LICENSURE RECIPROCITY FOR SPOUSES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT (Section 324.009)

Current law requires an oversight body for professional licenses to waive any examination, educational, or experience requirements within 30 days for a resident military spouse or a nonresident military spouse and issue the applicant a license if the applicant meets all other requirements. This bill provides a waiver to resident and nonresident spouses of Missouri law enforcement officers.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AWARDS (Section 173.1102 - 173.1105)

Beginning in the 2025-26 academic year, this bill specifies an increase for eligible recipients of the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Program.

For public two-year institutions the maximum increases by \$400 to \$1700 and the minimum by \$200 to \$500.

For public four-year institutions and the State Technical College, and approved private and virtual institutions, the maximum increases by \$700 to \$3500 and the minimum by \$250 to \$1750.

The bill replaces the phrase "expected family contribution" with "student aid index" which is the amount of money a student and family should pay to the cost of postsecondary education as calculated by the US Department of Education.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE EXAMINATIONS (Section 173.1352)

This bill requires public community colleges, colleges, and universities to adopt a policy for undergraduate course credit for any student who receives a score of 4 or higher on an International Baccalaureate Exam, as defined in the bill.

HIGHER EDUCATION CORE CURRICULUM (Sections 178.786 & 178.787)

This bill specifies that, prior to June 30, 2027, the coordinating board, with the assistance of an advisory committee, must approve a 60 credit hour transferable lower-division courses and common course numbering equivalency matrix for the five applicable degree programs outlined in the bill beginning in the 2027-28 academic year. Each public institution of higher education, offering the approved degree programs, must include in its programs of study an approved 60 hour program equivalency matrix.

If a student successfully completes the transferable lower-division courses at a public institution of higher education, such courses may be transferred and will be substituted for core curriculum courses in the same degree program at a receiving institution. The transferring student receives credit toward the student's degree and is not required to take additional core classes for the same degree program at the receiving institution. Transferring students who have not fully completed the transferable coursework curriculum may be required to satisfy further course requirements at the receiving institution.

The coordinating board must report to the House Higher Education Committee and the Senate Education Committee on progress related to the requirements of the bill.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 331, HB 946, HB 265, HB 183, HB 168, and HB 1017 & 291(2025).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the Senate Perfected version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this program would fill a gap between high school and the "Fast Track Program" and provide much needed resources for students interested in alternatives to two-year or Technical schools. The types of certificates that this program is addressing are in areas of high demand.

Testifying in person for the bill were Senator Carter; Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and Missouri NEA.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.