

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 356

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 11, 2021

The Senate Higher Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 356 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill establishes a study commission that will examine the creation and implementation of mutually beneficial relationships between the State's institutions of higher education and the municipalities in which the institutions are located. The commission will include the following 17 members: the Secretary of Higher Education and the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs; 11 members appointed by the Governor, including a representative of the State colleges and universities, a representative of the public research universities, a representative of the county colleges, a representative of the independent colleges and universities, a mayor of a municipality in which a State college or university is located, a mayor of a municipality in which a public research university is located, a mayor of a municipality in which a county college is located, and a mayor of a municipality in which an independent college or university is located, a representative of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, a representative of the American Federation of Teachers, and a representative of the New Jersey Education Association; and four public members with demonstrated expertise or interest in issues related to the work of the commission.

Under the bill, the commission will study and consider the following issues: (a) ways in which institutions of higher education and municipalities may work closely together to foster relationships that will benefit the institution, the institution's students, and the community; (b) ways to increase the engagement of institutions of higher education with their surrounding communities in order to address and respond to community needs; (c) specific types of structured partnerships that may mutually benefit institutions of higher education and their surrounding communities including, but not limited to, partnerships related to academic programs, research, student internship and work opportunities, and community service and outreach; (d) the process by which an institution of higher education may acquire additional land, including whether the municipality should be required to approve the procurement of new

land; and (e) recommendations or best practices for institutions of higher education and municipalities regarding the creation and implementation of mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships.

The bill directs the study commission to issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature no later than 12 months after the commission organizes.

As amended and reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 2311(1R), which also was amended and reported by the committee on this same date.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2020-2021 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to increase the commission's membership from 14 to 17 members. The committee added the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs, a representative of the American Federation of Teachers, and a representative of the New Jersey Education Association to the commission.