

1 **State of Arkansas**  
2 **78th General Assembly**  
3 **Regular Session, 1991**  
4 **By: Representative Mahony**

**A BILL ACT 856 OF 1991**  
**HOUSE BILL 1029**

**For An Act To Be Entitled**

8 "AN ACT TO ESTABLISH AN OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN  
9 THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER  
10 PURPOSES."

11

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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14 SECTION 1. In order to enhance the public's access to performance  
15 indicators and to better measure the dividends paid on the increasing public  
16 investment in Arkansas' institutions of higher education, the General Assembly  
17 finds that a separate office of accountability should be established within  
18 the State Department of Higher Education. The foremost obligation of this  
19 office shall be to publish annual campus-by-campus assessments, noting student  
20 achievement and research accomplishments and providing information to set  
21 future performance goals for each campus. A coequal obligation of this office  
22 is to be accurate and open with the Department, the Joint Interim Committee on  
23 Education of the General Assembly, the Joint Interim Oversight Subcommittee on  
24 Education Reform of the Joint Interim Committee on Education and the public.

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26 SECTION 2. (a) There is created the Office of Accountability within  
27 the Department of Higher Education.

28 (b) The Director of Higher Education shall establish a coordinator and  
29 staff for the Office of Accountability.

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31 SECTION 3. The Office of Accountability shall have the following  
32 duties:

33 (1) Beginning in 1992, to issue an annual report on the results of an  
34 overall study of accountability measures in higher education;

35 (2) To develop and publish results of a campus-by-campus assessment  
36 program of student achievement and research accomplishments; and using funds

1 authorized by this act and appropriated for this purpose, to make  
2 demonstration project grants to at least one public four-year and one public  
3 two-year institution in order to develop model institutional assessment  
4 programs which will serve as pilots for other colleges and universities in the  
5 state; the Department of Higher Education is authorized to develop rules and  
6 procedures for selecting demonstration projects and awarding grants for this  
7 purpose;

8       (3) To administer a "rising junior" test designed to test students'  
9 abilities to satisfactorily perform upper level course requirements and  
10 publish results of the test;

11       (4) To work with institutions of higher education to develop common  
12 instruments used by the institutions to measure job placement, job retention  
13 and wage rates for recent graduates and nongraduating students, and to measure  
14 student satisfaction by graduates and nongraduating students with their  
15 education experience, and to report results to the Department of Higher  
16 Education for publication;

17       (5) To compare the performance of Arkansas college graduates with  
18 graduates from other states, based on measures such as scores on Graduate  
19 Record Exams, the Law School Admissions Test, Graduate Management Admissions  
20 Test, National Teachers Exam and Medical College Admissions Test and publish  
21 these results;

22       (6) To identify those programs which could be internationally  
23 competitive by the year 2001;

24       (7) *To offer similar assistance to private institutions of higher*  
25 *education willing to participate in programs of the office;*

26       (8) To report annually to the Governor and General Assembly on  
27 provisions authorized in this act.

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29       SECTION 4. (a) The Office of Accountability shall make available to  
30 the Joint Interim Oversight Subcommittee on Educational Reform and the Joint  
31 Interim Committee on Education the reports the office submits to the Director  
32 of the State Department of Higher Education.

33       (b) Under the direction of the Director of the State Department of  
34 Higher Education, the staff of the Office of Accountability shall work  
35 cooperatively with and provide any necessary assistance to the Joint Interim  
36 Oversight Subcommittee on Educational Reform and the Joint Interim Committee

1 on Education.

2 (c) The Office of Accountability shall furnish information to  
3 appropriate legislative committees upon request.

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5 SECTION 5. (a) The Advisory Committee on Accountability established in  
6 Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-804, shall serve as a citizens' advisory committee on  
7 accountability for the Office of Accountability established herein.

8 (b) Any biennial reports required under Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-809 shall  
9 include findings and recommendations in regard to areas of concern for higher  
10 education in addition to those required by law.

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12 SECTION 6. Establishment of the Office of Accountability and  
13 implementation of the provisions of this legislation which directly affect the  
14 operation of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall be contingent  
15 on the appropriation and funding of the staff and operating budget necessary  
16 to allow the Department of Higher Education to carry out the duties assigned  
17 to the Department in this act. If no specific appropriation and funding to  
18 establish the Office of Accountability is enacted during the 78th Regular  
19 Session of the General Assembly, it shall be inoperative until such specific  
20 appropriation and funding is enacted.

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22 SECTION 7. All provisions of this act of a general and permanent nature  
23 are amendatory to the Arkansas Code of 1987 Annotated and the Arkansas Code  
24 Revision Commission shall incorporate the same in the Code.

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26 SECTION 8. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to  
27 any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect  
28 other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without  
29 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this  
30 act are declared to be severable.

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32 SECTION 9. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this act are  
33 hereby repealed.

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35 /s/J. Mahony

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APPROVED: 3/29/91

