

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

Act 265 of the Regular Session

1 State of Arkansas
2 85th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2005

A Bill

SENATE BILL 285

4
5 By: Senators Higginbothom, Baker, Bryles, Luker, Trusty
6 By: Representatives Kenney, Lamoureux

For An Act To Be Entitled

10 AN ACT TO CREATE CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AT
11 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN ARKANSAS TO IMPROVE
12 THE STATE'S ABILITY TO COMPETE IN THE KNOWLEDGE-
13 BASED ECONOMY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

16 AN ACT TO CREATE CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
17 AT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN ARKANSAS
18 TO IMPROVE THE STATE'S ABILITY TO
19 COMPETE IN THE KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY.

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

24 SECTION 1. Establishment of centers of excellence.

25 (a) For purposes of this section, "centers of excellence" means a
26 consortium of two (2) or more institutions of higher education working in
27 collaboration with regional economic developers. The center's of excellence
28 purpose shall be to address the workforce education and training needs of a
29 region for existing, expanding, or attracting new business and industry in
30 each of the economic development regions of the state.

31 (b)(1) In order to improve the state's ability to compete in the
32 knowledge-based economy the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board may
33 create acknowledged centers of excellence.

34 (2)(A) Institutions of higher education may submit proposals to
35 the Department of Higher Education to become a center of excellence.



1 (B) In each proposal for creation of a center of
2 excellence, institutions shall identify the center's:

3 (i) Technical alignment, academic alignment, or both
4 technical and academic alignment to existing or future businesses and
5 industries in the state.

6 (ii) Collaboration plan to serve a particular
7 occupation.

8 (c)(1) Two (2) representatives of the Department of Higher Education
9 as designated by the Director of the Department of Higher Education, and one
10 (1) representative each of the Department of Economic Development and the
11 Arkansas Science and Technology Authority shall meet jointly as needed to
12 review applications.

13 (2) The Department of Higher Education, the Department of
14 Economic Development, and the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority shall
15 jointly make a recommendation to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating
16 Board regarding which institutions shall be acknowledged as centers of
17 excellence in a particular program or field of study based on factors,
18 including, but not limited to:

19 (A) Number, type, and demand for related jobs;

20 (B) Quality of related instructional or research programs,
21 or both.

22 (C) Availability of faculty;

23 (D) Student accessibility;

24 (E) Feasibility of expected program cost; and

25 (F) Research capability.

26 (d) Final approval of centers of excellence shall be made by the
27 Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

28 (E) The designation of centers of excellence shall be fully reviewed
29 at least once every five (5) years.

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32 **APPROVED: 2/22/2005**

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