

**DRAFT MINUTES****LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE REALIGNMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION****Wednesday, July 15, 2015****10:30 a.m.****Room 151, State Capitol****Little Rock, Arkansas**

The Legislative Task Force to Study the Realignment of Higher Education met on Wednesday, July 15, 2015, in Room 151 of the State Capitol in Little Rock, Arkansas. The following members attended: Senators Ronald Caldwell; John Cooper; Jane English, and Stephanie Flowers. Representatives Bruce Cozart; Mark McElroy; Mark Lowery; Dan Sullivan; and Brent Tally.

Other Legislators present: Representatives Gary Deffenbaugh and Jeremy Gillam.

Representative Jeremy Gillam, Speaker of the House of Representatives, called the meeting to order.

Overview of Act 544 of 2015

Representative Gillam gave a brief overview of Act 544 of 2015 that created the Legislative Task Force to Study the Realignment of Higher Education.

The purpose of the task force is to study the advantages and disadvantages of realigning state-supported institutions of higher education; identify current redundancies that exist with the current structure of higher education; determine what mechanisms are currently available or could be available to provide cost savings to state-supported institutions of higher education and to students; improve accountability to and communications with the General Assembly; and review the structure of higher education systems in other 36 states, identifying those states with efficient and successful systems.

Adoption of Task Force Rules

Representative Gillam presented the rules of procedure for the Legislative Task Force to Study the Realignment of Higher Education. Representative Tally moved for the adoption of the rules. Senator English seconded the motion and without objection, the rules were adopted.

Selection of Co-Chair and Other Officers

Representative Cozart nominated Representative Lowery as Co-chair for the House and Senator Cooper nominated Senator English as Co-chair for the Senate. Without objections, Senator Jane English and Representative Mark Lowery were elected as Co-chairs.

Introduction of Task Force Members

Senator English and Representative Mark Lowery took over Co-chairing the meeting. Each task force member introduced themselves.

Discussion of Future Task Force Activities

The members discussed activities and issues to be tackled for the succeeding meetings. The following suggestions were gathered:

- request input from the Department of Higher Education and higher education institutions regarding their focus, mission, and activities to update the members on the current situation;
- request two-year and technical college systems to present possible benefits of realignment, to examine their systems, and come up with recommendations on how to do things efficiently;
- request universities to justify every program to see if they are engaged in any activities that deviate from their mission and for them to present any cost-saving measures they have done;
- request ASU to present their programs like the Osteopathic Doctor;
- task force members to join the Education Committee meeting in August, the time and date to be announced later;
- task force members to meet at least once every two months.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.