

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**VISION 2025  
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON THE  
FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Wednesday, September 18, 2013  
10:00 A.M.  
Room 151, State Capitol  
Little Rock, Arkansas**

Senator Joyce Elliott, the Acting Chair of the Vision 2025 Legislative Commission on the Future of Higher Education, called the Commission's first meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS OF THE VISION 2025 LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE:** Senator Joyce Elliott, Acting Chair; and Representative Ann V. Clemmer.

**NON-LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS OF THE VISION 2025 LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. Cory S. Anderson for Dr. Sherece West-Scantlebury; Mr. Forest Boles; Mr. Shane Broadway; Mr. Chad Brown; Ms. Jerri Derlikowski; Dr. Edward L. Franklin; Ms. Denise Garner; Dr. Joe D. Giammo; Dr. Robert Gunter; Dr. Tom Kimbrell; Mr. Nate Looney; Mr. Michael Moore for Dr. Donald Bobbitt; Ms. Cynthia Moten; Mr. Andrew Parker; Ms. Jamie Scott; Mr. Samuel Sicard; Mr. Grant Tennille; Mr. George West; and Ms. Kim Whitten.

**Morning Session**

Senator Elliott, the primary sponsor of Act 1082 of 2013, said she wants these discussions about the future of higher education to be a conversation in which anyone in the state can participate. She stated that the connection between higher education and its importance to the state has been made. She acknowledged this is a big undertaking which has a goal, but not a clear pathway. She advised the Commission to move forward, without settling, and without thinking about barriers.

Introduction of Vision 2025 Commission Members

Senator Elliott requested that members in attendance stand in order of seating and introduce themselves, name those who appointed them, and comment on affiliations outside of their appointment to the Commission.

**Mr. George West**, President, Communication Workers of America, Local 6508, gubernatorial appointment

**Mr. Samuel Sicard**, President & CEO, First National Bank of Fort Smith, Fort Smith, AR, gubernatorial appointment

**Mr. Chad Brown**, Director of Research, Circumference Group, Little Rock, AR, gubernatorial appointment

**Ms. Jerri Derlikowski**, Director of Education Policy and Finance, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, statutory designation by position

**Ms. Denise Garner**, Community Member, Fayetteville, AR, gubernatorial appointment

**Dr. Robert Gunter**, Deputy Director, Career and Technical Education, Arkansas Department of Career Education, statutory designee of Mr. William L. "Bill" Walker, Director, Arkansas Department of Career Education

**Ms. Jamie Scott**, Director, Upward Bound, Arkansas Baptist College, legislative appointment

- Ms. Cynthia Moten**, Associate Director for Academic Affairs, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, gubernatorial appointment
- Mr. Michael Moore**, Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Arkansas System, representing **Dr. Donald Bobbitt**, President, University of Arkansas System, gubernatorial appointment
- Mr. Cory S. Anderson**, Vice President, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, representing **Dr. Sherece West-Scantlebury**, President and CEO, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, statutory designation by position
- Dr. Tom Kimbrell**, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, statutory designation by position
- Mr. Shane Broadway**, Interim Director, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, statutory designation by position
- Mr. Forest Boles**, Office of the Governor, gubernatorial appointment
- Mr. Nate Looney**, Attorney, Waddell, Cole and Jones, Jonesboro, AR, gubernatorial appointment
- Dr. Edward L. Franklin**, Executive Director, Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges (AATYC), statutory designation by position (*Upon retirement of Dr. Franklin from AATYC, his successor, Mr. Bill Stovall, will take this position*)
- Ms. Kim Whitten**, Director of Operations, Ozarka College, Ash Flat campus, legislative appointment
- Dr. Joe D. Giammo**, Chair, Political Science Department, University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR), legislative appointment
- Mr. Andrew Parker**, Director of Governmental Relations, Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce / Associated Industries of Arkansas, statutory designation by position (*not present during introductions*)
- Mr. Grant Tennille**, Executive Director, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, statutory designation by position (*not present during introductions*)

Dr. Fitz Hill, Mr. Rex Nelson, and Ms. Sarah Roberson were not present at the meeting.

Senator Elliott announced that Ms. Adrienne Williams would staff the Commission.

#### Discussion of Purpose, Scope, and Goals of Act 1082 of 2013, and Vision 2025 Commission

Senator Elliott commented that this is deliberately a *legislative* commission, even though it has several gubernatorial appointments. She clarified that, because of term limits, she wanted the legislature to own the commission, so that, if necessary, it would roll over from session to session. She said this Commission has twenty-four (24) members. She noted a few of the appointments are very important to making this more than just a conversation among ourselves. She mentioned the position for “a representative from a historically minority serving university or college in the state.” She thought this position was important because those colleges and universities would be a large part of any solutions reached. She said minority voices are not always there as they should be, and made sure that language in the legislation ensured all voices would be heard. Senator Elliott discussed Act 1082 of 2013 in detail so that the charges for the Commission were clear. She covered all sections of the Act, including those on membership and appointments, election of a chair, rules and procedures, funding, and the purpose and responsibilities of the Commission. Senator Elliott stated a progress report was due from the Commission no later than April 30, 2014, with a final report due not later than October 15, 2014. She said the Commission shall cease to exist on January 1, 2017, but might need to continue beyond that date.

Senator Elliott praised the work of former Representative Johnnie Roebuck and the Task Force on Higher Education, Remediation, Retention, and Graduation Rates for which Representative Roebuck had been the Chair. She said the Task Force provided a lot of information on remediation and being prepared for higher education, and that the work in this Commission would build on those findings.

Handout:

Act 1082 of 2013

Presenter & Synopsis:

**Mr. Aims McGuinness**, Senior Associate, National Center for Higher Education Management (NCHEMS), was recognized. Mr. McGuinness said the focus of NCHEMS is use of information to shape policymaking. He explained that it tries to inform discussions in order to get states to concentrate on the connection between higher education and the future of a state's quality of life, economy, and education attainment of the population. He underscored the importance of the Vision 2025 Commission. He stressed how hard it is, and how important it is, for a state to keep focused on a goal over time in order to make measurable progress. Mr. McGuinness discussed previous efforts in Arkansas, as detailed in the 2011 NCHEMS Report, in a PowerPoint presentation with a handout. He summarized Findings from Data Analysis and Conclusions, Context for Changes: Arkansas Compared to US and SREB States, Progress Over Past Decade, Labor Market Demand, What is Required to Meet the Governor's 2025 Goal, and Next Steps Toward 2025.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- alignment of state financial policies and state priorities with regard to providing incentives for degree completion,
- progress of attainment rates for younger students and reasons for the gain,
- populations being left out of any gains,
- consideration and/or influence of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) on the work of the Commission,
- grants provided for certifications beyond high school to identify skill sets,
- challenges presented by *Lake View School District No. 25 v. Huckabee* over the last ten years, resulting in a focus on K-12 over higher education,
- need for more money and targeted money in the system,
- sharing data to see comparisons on a national level,
- driving points about higher education home to the general public,
- use of regional forums,
- need for this to be a conversation about the future of *people* and the *economy*,
- creating a culture of college success, and
- Career Pathways program and the Career Coaches program.

Senator Elliott thanked Mr. McGuinness for the presentation and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation for making his appearance possible.

PowerPoint Presentation:

The 2011 NCHEMS Report, "Increasing the Competitiveness of the Arkansas Workforce for a Knowledge-Based Economy" and Progress Toward 2025 Goals

Handout:

The 2011 NCHEMS Report, "Increasing the Competitiveness of the Arkansas Workforce for a Knowledge-Based Economy" and Progress Toward 2025 Goals

Presenter & Synopsis:

**Mr. Dave Spence**, President, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), was recognized. Mr. Spence described the SREB as an organization concerned with issues of pre-K through graduate school throughout sixteen (16) southern states. He stated that things in postsecondary education need to be transformed, but the funding is not there. He noted points had previously been made about the inextricable link between higher education attainment, individual success, the state's economy, and the importance of middle degrees and

certificates. He confirmed the goal is great, and reiterated it will be a challenge for every state to increase degrees and credentials by 4-5% per year. Mr. Spence stated the challenge is very different in a relatively low per capita income state, such as Arkansas. He said the annual *Quality Counts* report ranks states on a set of indicators in the areas of: finance, transitions and alignment, K-12 achievement, the chance for success, standards assessments and accountability, and the teaching profession. He noted Arkansas ranked fifth in the latest report. He said the SREB looks at where the achievement index is ranked higher than the chance for success index. He commented that Arkansas is making changes and preparing students who are going to become richer and more educated parents. He referred to the handout, *No Time To Waste*, and detailed recommendations for increasing the numbers of certificates and degrees in four action areas: 1) Goals and Expectations, 2) Accountability and Shared Responsibility, 3) Measures, and, 4) Financing and Educational Policies and Practices. He warned the extent of the college readiness problem has been underestimated. He discussed the role higher education needs to play regarding the CCSSI and the Partnership Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) assessments.

Handout:

No Time To Waste, Policy Recommendations for Increasing College Completion, SREB

Senator Elliott thanked Mr. Spence for his presentation.

At 12:30 p.m., Senator Elliott announced that the meeting would recess for a quick lunch, and would reconvene at 12:45 p.m.

Afternoon Session

Senator Elliott reconvened the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

Discussion and Comments from Commission Members

Suggestions for the Commission:

- hear about how the Task Force on Higher Education, Remediation, Retention, and Graduation Rates worked and about how subsequent legislation was achieved,
- look at data collected on K-through-12 employment by the Arkansas Research Center (ARC) and ARC reports on what's happening to graduates, and compare that data with future industry growth and future needs by region within the state,
- hear about innovative strategies to get more students to completion,
- schedule a meeting about what's currently going on in higher education,
- attend a November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting in which several existing and new entities will address remediation,
- infuse funds for programs, such as the Career Coaches program, into the budget during the Fiscal Session,
- take advantage of one-year certificates of value as one of the fastest ways to grow the per capita income within the state by building toward a change in the funding formula for two-year schools,
- hear testimonials on creating the workforce to grow advanced manufacturing jobs in the South,
- discuss entrepreneurship and how it relates to college graduation,
- get the perspective of higher education on the CCSSI,
- have *civilian* groups in different regions of the state present their perspective, and
- look at needs-based scholarships and availability of scholarships in general.

Establish and Adopt Commission Rules

Relevant Actions:

Senator Elliott requested that members review the Proposed Commission Rules. She called for a motion to adopt the rules. The motion was seconded. The motion was passed without objection.

Handout:

Proposed Commission Rules

Election and Presentation of Commission Chair and Vice Chair

Relevant Actions:

Senator Elliott reminded members that the Chair of the Commission had to be a legislator. She said the floor was open for adoption of the Chair. The motion to nominate Senator Joyce Elliott was put before the members. The motion was seconded. The motion was passed without objection.

Senator Elliott said the floor was open for adoption of the Vice Chair. The motion to nominate Ms. Denise Garner was put before the members. The motion was seconded. The motion was passed without objection.

Relevant Actions:

Senator Elliott made a motion for the reimbursement to members of travel expenses to Commission meetings. The motion was seconded. The motion was passed without objection.

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Friday, November 8, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 151 of the State Capitol in Little Rock

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Approved: 11/08/13