

1 State of Arkansas
2 93rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2021
4

As Engrossed: H3/18/21 S4/5/21

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1700

5 By: Representative Bentley
6 By: Senator G. Stubblefield
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES BY PROVIDING
10 STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND GUIDANCE COUNSELORS WITH
11 RELIABLE INFORMATION REGARDING THE COST OF COLLEGE
12 AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN ARKANSAS; AND FOR OTHER
13 PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

16 TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES BY PROVIDING
17 STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND GUIDANCE
18 COUNSELORS WITH RELIABLE INFORMATION
19 REGARDING THE COST OF COLLEGE AND JOB
20 OPPORTUNITIES IN ARKANSAS.
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24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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26 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings.

27 The General Assembly finds that:

28 (1) A fundamental goal of Arkansas's secondary and higher
29 education system is not only to educate and enrich young people, but also to
30 help young people establish a solid foundation for good-paying work;

31 (2) The cost of college continues to increase for young
32 individuals across the country, and student debt has become the second-
33 largest financial debt vehicle in the United States;

34 (3) The General Assembly is proud of its institutions of higher
35 education and believes they can compete with any in the nation, but their
36 cost to enrollees must be as transparent as possible;



1 (4) Middle and high school students deserve as much access as
2 possible to information regarding the costs of college and future job
3 opportunities in the state;

4 (5) Arkansas employers need workers with varied skills and
5 education levels, and future Arkansas workers should have a clear idea of
6 what steps are required to pursue the career of their choice; and

7 (6) The constantly changing nature of educational opportunities
8 and the job market requires up-to-date information for anyone seeking a job
9 or an education in Arkansas to properly navigate the marketplace.

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11 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 60, is amended to add an
12 additional subchapter to read as follows:

13 Subchapter 12 – Information Regarding the Cost of College and Job
14 Opportunities

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16 6-60-1201. Definition.

17 As used in this subchapter, "college" means a state-supported two-year
18 or four-year institution of higher education.

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20 6-60-1202. Information collected by Division of Higher Education.

21 (a) The Division of Higher Education shall collect and compile the
22 following information without limitation on an annual basis:

23 (1) The most in-demand jobs in the state, including without
24 limitation the approximate starting salaries and education levels required
25 for those jobs;

26 (2) The approximate average cost for all colleges in the state;

27 (3) The average monthly federal student loan payment for
28 individuals who attend or who have graduated from all colleges in the state;

29 (4) The average three-year federal student loan default rate for
30 all colleges in the state;

31 (5) The average total federal student loan debt for graduates of
32 in-state colleges for four-year degrees and graduate programs;

33 (6) The average graduation rate for all colleges in the state;

34 (7) The completion rates for:

35 (A) Apprenticeship programs;

36 (B) High school credential programs; and

1 (C) Career and technical education programs;

2 (8) The share of college graduates working in an occupation that
3 does not require a college degree for each major;

4 (9) The approximate average starting salary for individuals
5 graduating from a college;

6 (10) The approximate average starting salary for individuals who
7 have completed:

8 (A) An apprenticeship program;

9 (B) A high school credential program; or

10 (C) A career and technical education program; and

11 (11) The approximate average starting salary for individuals
12 graduating from a two-year college in the state.

13 (b) The division shall work with the following entities without
14 limitation to collect and compile the information required under subsection
15 (a) of this section:

16 (1) The Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce;

17 (2) The Division of Career and Technical Education;

18 (3) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education;

19 (4) The Division of Information Systems; and

20 (5) The Department of Commerce.

21 (c)(1) The information collected and compiled under subsection (a) of
22 this section shall utilize current state reports compiled into a single,
23 easily understandable digest.

24 (2) The state reports to be utilized shall include without
25 limitation the:

26 (A) Higher Education Consumer Guide;

27 (B) Economic Securities Report;

28 (C) Ready for Life Initiative report and State
29 Longitudinal Data System;

30 (D) College Scorecard; and

31 (E) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Data
32 Feedback reports of the National Center for Education Statistics.

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34 6-60-1203. Information published to public by Division of Higher
35 Education.

36 (a) The Division of Higher Education shall partner with the Ready for

1 Life Initiative to include information required under § 6-60-1202 in the
2 Arkansas Ready for Life searchable database, which shall include without
3 limitation:

4 (1) Approximate average annual cost;

5 (2) Average graduation rate;

6 (3) Average salary after attending;

7 (4) Highest paying salaries for top five (5) majors;

8 (5) Full-time enrollment headcount;

9 (6) Race and ethnicity information of enrollees in each program;

10 (7) Percentage of students in student loan default;

11 (8) Typical total federal student loan debt after graduation;

12 (9) Percentage of students receiving federal student loans;

13 (10) Typical monthly federal student loan payment;

14 (11) The average one-year retention rate of students majoring in
15 the top five (5) majors;

16 (12) Average success rates, which measure the percentage of
17 students who have graduated, transferred, or are still enrolled in colleges
18 in this state.

19 (b)(1) The database established under subsection (a) of this section
20 shall provide individuals with the ability to select a specific major or
21 program at a specific college.

22 (2) Upon selecting a specific major or program at a specific
23 college while using the database, the following overview shall be provided,
24 to be filled in with information required under subsection (a) of this
25 section as it applies to the specific major or program at the specific
26 college that the individual selected:

27 "For every 100 students starting in {insert major} in this
28 state, {insert number} will graduate in 6 years; of those, {insert number}
29 will get a job with an average starting salary of {insert salary} within 6
30 months of graduation. The average debt for the graduates will be {insert
31 debt}. The total cost on average for this degree is {insert total amount
32 paid}. Of the {insert number} who don't graduate, they will accumulate an
33 average debt of {insert debt}."

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35 6-60-1204. Information published and distributed to middle and high
36 school students by Department of Education.

1 The Department of Education shall publish and distribute to middle and
2 high school students in the State of Arkansas on an annual basis a
3 comparison, using the information collected under § 6-60-1202, that contains
4 the following information without limitation:

5 (1) The top fifty (50) majors for four-year degrees by salaries
6 after graduating;

7 (2) The top twenty (20) career and technical education and
8 certificate programs by salaries after graduating or receiving a certificate
9 of completion; and

10 (3) The top twenty-five (25) most in-demand jobs in the state
11 and their corresponding starting salaries and education requirements.

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13 6-60-1205. Effective date.

14 The requirements of this subchapter shall be effective no later than
15 July 1, 2022.

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17 /s/Bentley
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