

ASSEMBLY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1695

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 19, 2022

The Assembly Higher Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1695 (1R).

This bill provides that the Secretary of Higher Education will establish a performance quality standard for career-oriented programs of study offered by institutions of higher education and degree-granting proprietary institutions. In establishing the standard, the secretary is required to consider the ratio of the tuition and fees charged to students in the career-oriented program net of any institutional grant aid to the average earnings of New Jersey workers employed in the specific occupation for which the career-oriented program prepares students.

Under the bill, the secretary will ensure that career-oriented programs of study offered by institutions meet a minimum acceptable level of performance, as determined by the secretary. In the event that the secretary determines that a program does not meet the minimum acceptable level of performance, the secretary will suspend or terminate that program and take additional action to suspend or revoke the institution's license to award academic degrees.

Similarly, the bill also requires the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development to establish performance quality standards for:

(1) private career schools, referred to and defined as "qualifying schools," authorized jointly by the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development and the Commissioner of Education to operate in New Jersey; and

(2) private career schools authorized by a professional or occupational board established within the Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Law and Public Safety to offer an educational program required for licensure, registration, or certification in a profession or occupation regulated by a professional or occupational board established within the division.

In establishing the performance quality standards, the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development is required to consider the ratio of the tuition and fees charged to students in the program net of any institutional grant aid to the average earnings of

New Jersey workers employed in the specific occupation for which the program prepares students.

Under the bill, in the event that the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development determines that a program offered by a private career school does not meet the minimum acceptable level of performance, the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development and the Commissioner of Education are required to revoke, suspend or make conditional the certificate of approval issued under that law. Similarly, in the event that the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development determines that an educational program required for licensure, registration, or certification in a profession or occupation regulated by a professional or occupational board established within the division does not meet the minimum acceptable level of performance, the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development is required to issue a written determination directing the applicable board within the Division of Consumer Affairs to suspend or revoke the private career school's license or accreditation to offer such program.

Under the bill, all private career schools, including those operating with a certificate of approval issued jointly by the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development and the Commissioner of Education, and those authorized by a professional or occupational board established within the Division of Consumer Affairs to offer an educational program required for licensure, registration, or certification in a profession or occupation regulated by a professional or occupational board established within the Division of Consumer Affairs, are required to submit a quarterly report to the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development that includes:

- (1) the tuition and fees charged for each program;
- (2) a record for each student enrolled in each program. The student record is required to include, at a minimum: the student's social security number, gender, date of birth, date of enrollment, any date of completion, date of termination, date of start in a job, date of application for a license, licensing examination result, date of issuance of a license, and any credential issued; and
- (3) any additional information that may be required by the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development.