

# ASSEMBLY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

with committee amendments

### ASSEMBLY, No. 4967

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 18, 2023

The Assembly Higher Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4967, with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill makes various changes to the training requirements of governing board members of public institutions of higher education and provides for an annual appropriation of \$350,000 from the General Fund to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education for the bill's purposes.

Under current law, a newly appointed member of a governing board of a public institution of higher education is required to complete training within one year of the member's appointment. This amended bill requires that the training be completed within six months of the member's appointment and further that previously appointed members who were exempted from the current training requirement complete the training within six months of this bill's effective date. All members will be required to complete training within six months of the start of each successive term thereafter.

Current law generally provides that the subject matter of the board member training is prescribed by the institutions of higher education, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education. This amended bill provides that the secretary is to determine the subject matter of the training and that the training include the role of the governing board in the financial management of an institution of higher education. The amended bill provides that, in the case of four-year public institutions of higher education, the secretary will arrange for the training; current law, by contrast, requires the institution to arrange for the training. Public institutions of higher education also would no longer be required to conduct a periodic review of the training.

The amended bill directs the secretary to provide notification to a governing board member who has failed to comply with the training requirement and provide the member with a 30-day grace period to fulfill the outstanding training requirement. The amended bill permits the secretary to provide additional extensions to the grace period. The amended bill provides that failure to fulfill the outstanding training requirement within the grace period may constitute a resignation from the governing board at the discretion of the secretary and a vacancy will be deemed to exist. Under the bill, the board member will be

disqualified from being reappointed to the board, or appointed to any other governing board of a public institution of higher education, for the succeeding two-year period.

Additionally, the amended bill permits training for governing board members to be made available online.

The amended bill further repeals a section of law that requires four-year public institutions of higher education to provide certain information, orientation, and training to each of its governing board members. Under the amended bill, all required training for governing board members at public institutions of higher education is to be arranged for by the secretary.

Finally, the amended bill provides that \$350,000 will be annually appropriated from the General Fund to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to effectuate the bill's purposes.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- provide that all governing board members are to complete training within six months of the start of each successive term;
- permit the Secretary of Higher Education to provide extensions to the grace period; and
- permit training for governing board members to be made available online.