

Bill No. SB 1920

Barcode 095310

Proposed Committee Substitute by the Committee on Education

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to postsecondary education; providing definitions; specifying the constitutional duties of the Board of Governors of the State University System under s. 7, Art. IX of the State Constitution; specifying the constitutional duties of the Legislature; providing legislative intent; amending s. 112.313, F.S.; prohibiting citizen members of the Board of Governors of the State University System and citizen members of a board of trustees of a local constituent university from representing principals before the Legislature; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, in 2000, the Florida Legislature enacted chapter 2000-321, Laws of Florida, the Florida Education Governance Reorganization Act of 2000, which restructured the state's public education system to create a seamless K-20 system and repealed the Florida Board of Regents, an entity previously established by the Legislature to govern the administration of the State University System, and

WHEREAS, in 2000, the Legislature consolidated the administration of the state's institutions of higher education with grades K through 12 in the Florida Board of Education (later the State Board of Education) and the Commissioner of Education, and

WHEREAS, in 2002, the voters amended the State Constitution to create the Board of Governors to "be responsible for the coordinated and accountable operation of the whole university system" and did not express an intent to

Barcode 095310

1 | limit legislative powers granted in section 1, Article IX of
2 | the State Constitution, and

3 | WHEREAS, in its review of the ballot title and summary
4 | to the initiative proposal creating the Board of Governors,
5 | the Florida Supreme Court found that the amendment would
6 | authorize "the statewide board of governors to 'operate,
7 | regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management
8 | of the whole university system'" [Advisory Opinion to the
9 | Attorney General Re Local Trustees, 819 So.2d 725, 729 (Fla.
10 | 2002)], and

11 | WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court found that the
12 | ballot title and summary for the proposed amendment plainly
13 | and unequivocally expressed its chief purpose and that this
14 | purpose "does not substantially affect or alter any provision
15 | in the State Constitution" [Id. at 732], and

16 | WHEREAS, the Court's advisory opinion indicates that
17 | the Court interpreted "the plain unequivocal language" of the
18 | proposal's ballot summary as not making fundamental changes
19 | redistributing legislative power to an entity within another
20 | branch, which would alter the balance of governmental powers,
21 | and

22 | WHEREAS, since 1968 and continuing through today,
23 | Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution provides
24 | that "[a]dequate provision shall be made by law for ... the
25 | establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions of
26 | higher learning ...," and

27 | WHEREAS, as of November 2002, the Board of Governors is
28 | charged by Section 7 of Article IX of the State Constitution
29 | with the responsibility to "operate, regulate, control, and be
30 | fully responsible for the management of the whole university
31 | system," and

Bill No. SB 1920

Barcode 095310

1 WHEREAS, the canons of Florida statutory construction
2 require that laws on the same subject are to be construed "in
3 harmony with one another" so as not to render any part
4 meaningless based upon the presumption that the people would
5 not have adopted useless constitutional law [See, e.g., *Unruh*
6 *v. State*, 669 So.2d 242 (Fla. 1996); see, also, *State ex rel.*
7 *McKay v. Keller*, 191 So. 542 (Fla. 1939) (holding that
8 principles governing the construction of statutes are
9 generally applicable as well to the construction of
10 constitutions)], and

11 WHEREAS, in accordance with these dictates, it is the
12 Legislature's intention herein to harmonize and give
13 meaningful effect to both Sections 1 and 7 of Article IX of
14 the State Constitution, and

15 WHEREAS, litigants in *Floridians for Constitutional*
16 *Integrity, Inc., et al. v. State Board of Education and Board*
17 *of Governors*, Case No. 04-CA-3040, filed in the Second
18 Judicial Circuit in and for Leon County, Florida, have alleged
19 that the 2002 amendment so altered the State Constitution that
20 the Legislature cannot enact laws controlling the policy or
21 direction of the State University System, that the Board of
22 Governors is not subject to legislative control, that the
23 Board of Governors controls such public funds as tuition and
24 student fees, federal contracts and grants, and that all
25 authority over the State University System was transferred by
26 the 2002 amendment to the Board of Governors subject only to
27 legislative appropriation authority of only the state's
28 general revenue, and

29 WHEREAS, on the contrary, the Florida Supreme Court
30 stated that while the 2002 amendment interacts with Section 1
31 of Article IX, "it does not substantially affect or change" it

Bill No. SB 1920

Barcode 095310

1 [Advisory Opinion, Id. at 730], and

2 WHEREAS, it is the duty of the Florida Legislature to
3 uphold Section 3 of Article II of the State Constitution and
4 safeguard the powers of one branch of government from
5 encroachments from entities of the other branches, and

6 WHEREAS, the Legislature has found that the powers of
7 the Legislature in Section 1 of Article IX of the State
8 Constitution and the powers of the Board of Governors in
9 Section 7 of Article IX of the State Constitution must and can
10 be defined in harmony to give each entity its full measure of
11 constitutional responsibility, and

12 WHEREAS, Section 18 of Article III of the State
13 Constitution confers upon the Legislature the obligation to
14 prohibit conflict between the public duties and private
15 interests of state officers, and

16 WHEREAS, the members of the statewide board of
17 governors and local boards of trustees, as established in
18 Section 7, Article IX of the State Constitution, are state
19 officers and subject to the ethics laws of the State of
20 Florida, and

21 WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Legislature to ensure
22 good government practices in the operation of the education
23 boards of this state, and

24 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that lobbyists serving
25 as members of state education boards present an actual or
26 potential conflict of interest, and

27 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that the Board of
28 Governors and the local boards of trustees should reach their
29 decisions free of political influence and in the best
30 interests of the people of the State of Florida, NOW,
31 THEREFORE,

Bill No. SB 1920

Barcode 095310

1 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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3 Section 1. Responsibility for the State University
4 System under Section 7, Article IX of the State Constitution;
5 legislative finding and intent.--

6 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.--

7 (a) Definitions.--For purposes of this act, the term:

8 1. "Board of Governors" as it relates to the State
9 University System and as used in Section 7, Article IX of the
10 State Constitution and Title XLVIII and other sections of the
11 Florida Statutes is the Board of Governors of the State
12 University System which belongs to and is part of the
13 executive branch of state government.

14 2. "Institutions of higher learning" as used in the
15 State Constitution and the Florida Statutes includes publicly
16 funded state universities.

17 3. "Public officer" as used in the Florida Statutes
18 includes members of the Board of Governors.

19 4. "State university" or "state universities" as used
20 in the State Constitution and the Florida Statutes are
21 agencies of the state which belong to and are part of the
22 executive branch of state government. This definition of state
23 universities as state agencies is only for the purposes of the
24 delineation of constitutional lines of authority. Statutory
25 exemptions for state universities from statutory provisions
26 relating to state agencies that are in effect on the effective
27 date of this act remain in effect and are not repealed by
28 virtue of this definition of state universities.

29 (b) Constitutional duties of the Board of Governors of
30 the State University System.--In accordance with Section 7,
31 Article IX of the State Constitution, the Board of Governors

Bill No. SB 1920

Barcode 095310

1 of the State University System has the duty to operate,
2 regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management
3 of the whole publicly funded State University System and the
4 board, or the board's designee, has responsibility for:

5 1. Defining the distinctive mission of each
6 constituent university.

7 2. Defining the articulation of each constituent
8 university in conjunction with the Legislature's authority
9 over the public schools and community colleges.

10 3. Ensuring the well-planned coordination and
11 operation of the State University System.

12 4. Avoiding wasteful duplication of facilities or
13 programs within the State University System.

14 5. Accounting for expenditure of funds appropriated by
15 the Legislature for the State University System as provided by
16 law.

17 6. Submitting a budget request for legislative
18 appropriations for the institutions under the supervision of
19 the board as provided by law.

20 7. Adopting strategic plans for the State University
21 System and each constituent university.

22 8. Approving, reviewing, and terminating degree
23 programs of the State University System.

24 9. Governing admissions to the state universities.

25 10. Serving as the public employer to all public
26 employees of state universities for collective bargaining
27 purposes.

28 11. Establishing a personnel system for all state
29 university employees; however, the Department of Management
30 Services shall retain authority over state university
31 employees for programs established in sections 110.123,

Bill No. SB 1920

Barcode 095310

1 110.1232, 110.1234, 110.1238, and 110.161, Florida Statutes,
2 and in chapters 121, 122, and 238, Florida Statutes.

3 12. Complying with, and enforcing for institutions
4 under the board's jurisdiction, all applicable local, state,
5 and federal laws.

6 (c) Constitutional duties of the Legislature.--In
7 accordance with Section 3, Article II of the State
8 Constitution, which establishes the separation of powers of
9 three branches of government; Section 1, Article III of the
10 State Constitution, which vests the legislative power of the
11 state in the Legislature; Section 8, Article III of the State
12 Constitution, which provides the exclusive executive veto
13 power of the Governor and the exclusive veto override power of
14 the Legislature; Section 19, Article III of the State
15 Constitution, which requires the Legislature to enact state
16 planning and budget processes and requirements for budget
17 requests by general law; Section 1, Article VII of the State
18 Constitution, which requires that the authority to expend
19 state funds be by general law enacted by the Legislature; and
20 Section 1, Article IX of the State Constitution, which
21 requires the Legislature to make adequate provision by law for
22 the "establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions
23 of higher learning," the Legislature has the following
24 responsibilities:

25 1. Making provision by law for the establishment,
26 maintenance, and operation of institutions of higher learning
27 and other public education programs that the needs of the
28 people may require.

29 2. Appropriating all state funds through the General
30 Appropriations Act or other law.

31 3. Establishing tuition and fees.

Bill No. SB 1920

Barcode 095310

1 4. Establishing policies relating to merit and
2 need-based student financial aid.

3 5. Establishing policies relating to expenditure of,
4 accountability for, and management of funds appropriated by
5 the Legislature or revenues authorized by the Legislature.
6 This includes, but is not limited to, policies relating to:
7 budgeting, deposit of funds; investments; accounting;
8 purchasing, procurement, and contracting; insurance; audits;
9 maintenance and construction of facilities; property; bond
10 financing; leasing; and information reporting.

11 6. Maintaining the actuarial and fiscal soundness of
12 centrally administered state systems by requiring state
13 universities to continue to participate in programs such as
14 the Florida Retirement System, the state group health
15 insurance programs, the state telecommunications and data
16 network (SUNCOM), and the state casualty insurance program.

17 7. Establishing and regulating the use of state powers
18 and protections, including, but not limited to, eminent
19 domain, certified law enforcement, and sovereign immunity.

20 8. Establishing policies relating to the health,
21 safety, and welfare of students, employees, and the public
22 while present on the campuses of institutions of higher
23 learning.

24 (2) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.--It is the intent of the
25 Legislature to reenact laws relating to the Board of Governors
26 of the State University System, the university boards of
27 trustees, the State Board of Education, and the postsecondary
28 education system in accordance with the findings of this act.

29 Section 2. Subsection (17) is added to section
30 112.313, Florida Statutes, to read:

31 112.313 Standards of conduct for public officers,

Bill No. SB 1920

Barcode 095310

1 employees of agencies, and local government attorneys.--

2 (17) BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND BOARDS OF TRUSTEES.--No

3 citizen member of the Board of Governors of the State

4 University System, nor any citizen member of a board of

5 trustees of a local constituent university, shall have or hold

6 any employment or contractual relationship as a legislative

7 lobbyist requiring annual registration and reporting pursuant

8 to s. 11.045.

9 Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
10 law.

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