

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in the Senate Mezzanine of the State Capitol on February 12, 2008 at 3:00 P.M.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29th
Cowser of the 46th
Staton of the 18th
Chance of the 16th
Wiles of the 37th
Davenport of the 44th
Golden of the 8th

Note: Senator Orrock of the 36th and Senator Curt Thompson of the 5th were absent.

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 3:07 PM

SB 434 (Sen. Harp, 29th)

**Change Georgia Department of
Technical and Adult Education**

Senator Harp spoke to the bill explaining that this changed the name slightly because of past confusion. Senator Cowser made the motion that **SB 434 “do pass”**. Senator Chance seconded the motion. **SB 434** passed by unanimous vote.

SB 435 (Sen. Harp, 29th)

**Renaming the Department of
Technical and Adult Education**

Senator Harp spoke to the bill explaining this was a companion bill to SB 434 and is necessary due to a name change with retirement. Senator Cowser made the motion that **SB 435 “do pass”**. Senator Chance seconded the motion. **SB 435** passed by unanimous vote.

Senator Orrock came into the meeting after the vote.

Michael A. Gerber, President of Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education, spoke to the committee about their organization. He stated that it was founded in 1938 and represents 19 schools. These schools award 60% of the states bachelor degrees. ARCHE partnered with the Carl Vincent Institute to conduct the Peach State Poll regarding Higher education. ARCHE helped develop the questions with Carl Vincent, and then Carl Vincent carried out the survey.

The Survey stated the following concepts by the people polled:

- The majority of people polled have a high opinion of state institutions.
- Those polled believe that state institutions are important to the economic improvement of the state.
- 60% of those polled believe quality is the most important aspect of colleges and should be the top priority. The second tier priorities were access and cost.
- 80% of all parents polled expect their children to go to college. However, 60% consider college unaffordable without the HOPE scholarship.
- Most people polled did not realize how affordable Georgia Higher Education is in comparison to other states.
- Most people polled did not realize there are other forms of financial assistance available to students including loans and grants.
- An encouraging note is that it was estimated that 2/3 of Georgians are saving for their children's education.

Senator Harp suggested that the state would benefit from an advertising campaign to show the citizens of Georgia what a bargain the state's higher education institutions are.

Senator Wiles requested that Mr. Gerber get back to him on how private colleges will increase the size of their schools to meet the need of the state's citizens.

Senator Wiles asked the Board of Regents to explain why some offices in the university system are being consolidated and people in his district are losing their jobs

Tom Daniels, Senior Vice Chancellor of the Board of Regents replied that the Chancellor talked about the idea of shared services in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness. He stated that the University System of Georgia was found to have 30+ payrolls when the task can be handled by just a few. Presidents of all the institutions had been briefed. Mr. Daniels agreed to bring back more information for the next meeting.

Senate Higher Education Committee
Page 3 of 3
February 12, 2008

Senator Wiles wanted to know if the jobs would be privatized. Mr. Daniels stated it would be premature to make a statement on that. He stated that it was his hope that some of the institutions would come together and take on the work for all the other institutions. Mr. Daniel agreed to have someone prepare a briefing for the next higher education meeting.

Senator Harp asked for a briefing from the Board of Regents, preferably the Chancellor, at the next committee meeting.

There being no further business, Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Staton of the 18th, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in the Senate Mezzanine of the State Capitol on February 21, 2008 at 3:00 P.M.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29th
Cowser of the 46th
Davenport of the 44th

Note: Staton of the 18th, Chance of the 16th, Orrock of the 36th, Wiles of the 37th, Golden of the 8th and Curt Thompson of the 5th were absent.

Chairman Harp canceled the meeting due to a lack of quorum.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Harp of the 29th, Chairman

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in the Senate Mezzanine of the State Capitol on February 26, 2008 at 3:00 P.M.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29th
Cowser of the 46th
Staton of the 18th
Chance of the 16th
Wiles of the 37th
Davenport of the 44th
Orrock of the 36th

Note: Senator Golden of the 8th, and Senator Curt Thompson of the 5th were absent.

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 3:08 PM

**SB 492 (Sen. Bulloch, 11th) “Eligible High School” Definitions in
Relation to Hope Scholarship**

Senator Harp stated that Senator Wiles had offered an amendment to SB 492, and declared that it was a friendly amendment. Senator Wiles stated that he would pull the amendment if it jeopardized the bill's passage on the floor.

Senator Bulloch spoke to the bill stating that it addressed Georgia residents which are in private high schools outside the state, but are being refused the HOPE scholarship. The bill would expand the accredited high schools recognized by HOPE to include the Florida Council of Independent Schools.

Senator Wiles introduced the amendment which deals with HOPE checkpoints and how they may negatively affect those students who enter college with lots of credit hours already. The amendment is aimed at benefiting those students who challenge themselves in high school with harder classes, but might have lower grade point averages as a result.

Senator Wiles made the motion that **SB 492 “do pass by substitute”**. Senator Chance seconded the motion. **SB 492** passed by unanimous vote.

Chairman Harp recognized Dr. Henry Hector, President of the Georgia Foundation for Independent Colleges and Dr. Elizabeth Keish, President of Agnes Scott College.

Senate Higher Education Committee
Page 2 of 2
February 26, 2008

Dr. Hector wanted to thank the Higher Education Committee for the previous Tuition Equalization grants and to support an increase in the grants. He stated that the "buying power" has declined over the past 10 years. The University of Georgia receives \$5,000 and the private schools would like equal compensation for their students. He requested that their HOPE funding rise each year based on an average increase formula.

Dr. Kiesh stated that 50% of Agnes Scott students are from Georgia. She went on to explain that Agnes Scott was not a school of privilege or wealth, but enrolled high levels of minority and Pell grant students.

Senator Wiles asked Dr. Kiesh how much the student body had increased recently. Dr. Kiesh stated that enrollment had almost doubled in the last decade. Senator Wiles stated he wanted to urge private institutions to grow and take more students, because the population is growing so quickly and there are not enough slots for all the state's students at public universities.

Senator Wiles then addressed Dr. Hector and Dr. Kiesh and stated that he would like to see them enter into an agreement with the State of Georgia to create more slots if the state increases their funds.

Dr. Hector answered that he could not state how many more slots would be created with the addition of extra funding. He assured the committee that studies would be done to get an averaging system set up to be able to answer those questions.

Lee Hughes, President of SCAD, stated that they were the largest art school in the world. SCAD has now admitted over 8,000 students. He said that SCAD is growing tremendously to accommodate Georgia students.

There being no further business, Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 3:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Staton of the 18th, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in the Senate Mezzanine of the State Capitol on March 4, 2008 at 3:00 P.M.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29th
Cowser of the 46th
Stanton of the 18th
Golden of the 8th
Orrock of the 36th
Wiles of the 37th

Note: Senators Chance of the 16th, Davenport of the 44th, and Curt Thompson of the 5th were absent.

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 3:10 PM

**SB 480 (Sen. Williams, 19th) Tuition Equalization Grant Requirements
for Private Colleges and Universities
HOPE Accreditation Requirements**

Senator Williams spoke to **SB 480**. He stated that the legislation came about to help colleges who have lost accreditation. This would allow them to receive HOPE money while re-applying for accreditation. The only school it would currently affect in the system is Morris Brown College. It could also be used to potentially help Clayton County School students if the accreditation is lost in that county. Senator Williams introduced Morris Brown College president Stan Pritchett, who had just recently joined the institution. Morris Brown College had lost their accreditation in 2002 and had later replaced problematic administration. Mr. Pritchett explained the last road block in regaining accreditation was the financial road block of allowing students to get HOPE. This would attract more students back to the college.

Senator Orrock made the motion that **SB 480 “do pass by substitute”**. Senator Golden seconded the motion. **SB 480** passed by unanimous vote.

SB 196 (Sen. Reed, 35th)

Military Scholarships

Senator Reed spoke to **SB 196**. He stated that this bill is modeled after very successful legislation in Wisconsin. According to Senator Reed this bill allows any child whose parent is killed or 50% disabled in military service to have a full scholarship to college. The bill overlaps with the HERO scholarship which was passed last session.

Senator Wiles asked how this bill would overlap with the HERO Scholarship and explained to the committee that HERO already gives \$2000 a year for 4 years, with no injury required. Senator Wiles expressed concern that there would be people who would move to Georgia solely to receive the benefit. He also stated that he would like to see a cap for the amount of tuition paid out.

Senator Reed responded that this bill is focused to benefit Georgia residents and that he would be willing to modify the bill to narrow the language to residency requirements. Senator Reed did state that he respectfully disagreed with the cap being placed on the amount. He stated that his purpose was to see that all Georgia veteran children who lost their parent were covered for college.

Chairman Harp requested that the varying views be submitted as two separate amendments so neither would keep the bill from passing.

Jeff Lanier, Legislative Council, recommended that the language of the bill be modified to state "50% disability and above", rather than exactly 50% disability.

Senator Golden made a motion that **SB 196 "do pass"**. Senator Orrock seconded the motion. **SB 196** passed by unanimous vote.

SB 514 (Sen. Harp, 29th)

**Residency of Students in the University
System of Georgia**

NOTE: Senator Orrock left the meeting.

Senator Harp introduced Amanda Seals and Darryl Griswald of the Board of Regents to speak to **SB 514**. The legislation is designed to simply clean up legislation wording by striking words which the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional in *Vlandis vs. Klein*. The Regents have already made the change in policy but it needed to be changed in statute.

Senator Wiles asked if this would affect providing tuition for illegal aliens.

Senate Higher Education Committee
Page 3 of 3
March 4, 2008

Mr. Griswald explained it should not affect any residency requirements because it is implied in the statute.

Senator Golden made the motion that **SB 514 “do pass”**. Senator Cowser seconded the motion. [SB 514](#) passed 4-1. Senator Wiles opposed the bill.

Senator Staton asked the Chairman if the committee would hear HB 1156. He stated that he wanted to go on record now as being very opposed to the committee giving this legislation a hearing.

There being no further business, Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 3:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Staton of the 18th, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in Room 125 of the State Capitol on March 18, 2008 at 4:00 P.M.

The following Senators were present:

Cowsert of the 46th
Staton of the 18th
Chance of the 16th
Davenport of the 44th
Golden of the 8th
Orrock of the 36th
Curt Thompson of the 5th
Wiles of the 37th

Note: Senator Harp of the 29th was absent.

Vice Chairman Cowsert called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM

HB 515 (Rep. Freeman, 140th) “Lottery for Education Act”

Representative Freeman spoke to **HB 515**. He stated that this bill is identical to Senator Harp’s bill which had already passed the Senate. He stated it should be fairly non-controversial.

Senator Wiles made the motion that **HB 515 “do pass”**. Senator Chance seconded the motion. **HB 515** passed by unanimous vote.

HB 1184 (Rep. Freeman, 140th) **Students with Disabilities Pilot Collegiate Sports Program**

Representative Freeman spoke to HB 1184, urging the Legislature to adopt an intercollegiate disability sports program. The 5 year pilot program would occur in two institutions. The program would cost about \$800,000. The programs would be housed outside the athletic programs.

Scott Hollonbeck spoke as a concerned citizen to support the bill, with the exception it should be included within the athletic department.

Jason Fowler spoke as a concerned citizen to support the bill; with the exception it should be included within a University’s athletic department.

Nancy Turnipseed spoke as a concerned citizen to support the bill with the exception that disabled students should be included with all other students in the athletics department.

Adam Bashacas spoke as a concerned citizen to support the bill with the exception it should be included in the athletics department. He also urged that the University System include power chair sports.

Scott Coleman spoke as the adaptive sports coordinator for DeKalb County Schools. He taught approximately 165 athletes in his tenure. He stated that it was an important move when DeKalb included the disabled sports program within the athletics department. He stated it allowed disabled students to feel included and share sports resources. He also stated that it was a disappointment that so many of his graduates had to go to other states to participate in University athletics.

Anne Cody, Director of Blaze Sports, stated she would like to echo the sentiments of all those before her.

Ben Johnson spoke as a faculty member for Kennesaw State. He fully supported the bill in its current form. He was surprised that so many had spoken to the program to be included in the athletics departments and said that the committee was being provided false information. He said of the 9 programs in the United States, only 2 were housed under their athletics program. It was his belief that the program would fail if it was placed in athletics because it would always be secondary.

Senator Wiles asked to hear the Regents view on the committee telling the Regents how to implement the program. He asked if this would conflict with the constitutional division of the branches. He also asked how this program would be funded.

Tom Daniels, Vice Chancellor of the Board of Regents, responded that he wanted always to cooperate with the legislature and they already agreed with this program and supported it fully. The program would not require any money from the 2008 budget; it would be from the FY 2009 budget.

Senator Wiles stated he would vote "no" on the bill, not because he did not support the program, but because of constitutional issues.

Senate Higher Education Committee
Page 3 of 4
March 18, 2008

Senator Chance made a motion that **HB 1184 "do pass as amended"**. Senator Orrock seconded the motion. [HB 1184](#) passed 7-1. Senator Wiles opposed the bill.

[HB 1183](#) (Rep. Smith, 113th) Non-Lapsing Revenue

Representative Smith spoke to **HB 1183**. He explained the bill would allow colleges to carry funds forward just as any business would. The bill is almost identical to SB 111 from last session, except this bill correctly originates from the House.

Senator Orrock made the motion that **HB 1183 "do pass by substitute"**. Senator Chance seconded the motion. [HB 1183](#) passed by unanimous vote.

[HB 1091](#) (Rep. Hembree, 67th) Residency Requirements for In-State Tuition and HOPE Scholarship

Representative Hembree spoke to **HB 1091**. He explained the bill was the response to misuse of HOPE funds and in-state tuition for non-eligible students. This bill would simply put the Board of Regents current policy into statute.

Senator Orrock asked how the language would affect non United States citizens.

Representative Hembree explained it would not change anything because it only solidifies the Regents current policy.

Senator Wiles asked if this is not a constitutional infringement on the Regents constitutional autonomy from the legislature.

Tom Daniel explained he would prefer the Regents policy not be placed in statute, but they would follow legislation.

Senator Wiles made the motion that **HB 1091 "do pass"**. Senator Golden seconded the motion. **HB 1091** passed 3-3, with Chairman Cowsert casting the deciding affirmative vote. [HB 1091](#) passed 4-3.

Senate Higher Education Committee
Page 4 of 4
March 18, 2008

There being no further business, Chairman Cowser adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Staton of the 18th, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in Room 125 of the State Capitol on March 27, 2008 at 11:00 a.m.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29th
Cowser of the 46th
Staton of the 18th
Chance of the 16th
Davenport of the 44th
Golden of the 8th
Wiles of the 37th

Note: Senator Orrock of the 36th and Senator Curt Thompson of the 5th were absent.

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

HB 919 (Rep. Hembree, 67th) Georgia Lottery Corporation Revised

Representative Hembree spoke to **HB 919**. He stated that he was working with Senator Seabaugh on this bill, which tends to put more oversight over the Georgia lottery.

Senator Cowser made the motion that **HB 919 "do pass by substitute"**. Senator Staton seconded the motion. **HB 919** passed by unanimous vote.

NOTE: Senator Wiles and Senator Chance came into the meeting.

HB 152 (Rep. Lunsford, 110th) Home School Eligible for HOPE

Chairman Harp presented **HB 152** in the absence of Representative Lunsford.

Tom Daniel, Vice Chancellor of the Board of Regents, explained that this bill would allow home school students, who score an 85th percentile on the ACT or SAT, to receive the HOPE scholarship. When asked what the 85th percentile meant, Chancellor Daniel further explained that it would represent a strong college grade level of "B".

Senator Wiles made the motion that **HB 152 "do pass"**. Senator Staton seconded the motion. **HB 152** passed by unanimous vote.

Senate Higher Education Committee
Page 2 of 2
March 27, 2008

There being no further business, Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Staton of the 18th, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

April 10, 2008

Mr. Robert Ewing
Secretary of the Senate
353 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Mr. Ewing:

The following bills remained in the Senate Higher Education Committee at the close of the 2008 session.

[SB 35](#)

[SB 74](#)

[SB 279](#)

[HB 941](#)

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Vicki Gibbs
Recording Secretary