

2009-2010 SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE ROSTER

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## **HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE RULES**

1. These Committee Rules of Operation shall be consistent with Senate Rule 2-1.5 (d) regarding the establishment of Rules of Operation.
2. Quorum of the Committee shall be five (5) members.
3. The Chairman shall have the authority to refer bills and resolutions to be considered and the order in which said measures are considered; the Chairman shall have the authority to call a bill, resolution, substitute or amendment for debate and explanation only.
4. The Chairman shall have the authority to refer bills and resolutions to subcommittees for study. Such subcommittees in turn shall have the authority to make recommendations on such measures to the full Committee at such time as shall be designated by the Chairman.
5. The Committee shall convene, recess, and adjourn upon the order of the Chairman.
6. A bill or resolution will be considered only after presentation by its principal author or other legislator whom he/she may designate. The principal author shall be the legislator whose name first appears on the list of authors.
7. The Chairman reserves the right to delay action on substitutes and amendments not provided to the Chairman at least 24 hours prior to the hearing.
8. Any member or members of the Committee who disagree(s) with the majority report of the Committee shall be privileged to file a minority report if they so desire.
9. These rules may be amended upon a motion duly made and subsequently approved by two-thirds of the members of the Committee.
10. Where these rules are silent on a specific issue, the Rules of the Senate as adopted shall govern.

## **SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in Room 125 of the State Capitol on January 28, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman  
Cowser of the 46<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman  
Chance of the 16<sup>th</sup>  
Golden of the 8<sup>th</sup>  
Orrock of the 36<sup>th</sup>  
Thompson of the 5<sup>th</sup>  
Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Crosby of the 13<sup>th</sup>

Note: Senator Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup> was absent.

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

The meeting began with Chairman Harp introducing new members of the Committee and the staff, followed by a brief overview of the agenda and member packets.

Chairman Harp introduced the Rules of the Committee, noting that there had been no changes from the rules used during the previous session.

Senator Chance made a motion to adopt the Rules of the Senate Higher Education Committee. Senator Cowser seconded the motion. The Rules of the Committee were adopted unanimously.

Chairman Harp introduced Jett Toney, Lobbyist for the Georgia Foundation of Independent Colleges. Mr. Toney then introduced Henry Hector, President of the Georgia Foundation of Independent Colleges.

Presenting on behalf of the private colleges were presidents of two of the member institutions, Dr. Elizabeth Kiss of Agnes Scott College and Dean C. Collins of Atlanta Christian College.

Dr. Kiss thanked the Committee for the support of the legislature in regards to private higher education. She especially noted that the increase in HOPE allotment for private students last year had been an extremely valuable resource for their students. She stated that about 50% of the students at Agnes Scott are from Georgia, and are a proud women's college with a 20% African American population. Approximately one-third of the students are from underrepresented cultural groups and another one-third are recipients of Pell Grants for federal income assistance. Dr. Kiss shared two stories of student successes.

The first story she shared is of a young lady from Tybee Island, Georgia. She had never been out of the state before attending Agnes Scott. She received the opportunity to study in South Africa. She met Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu while in Africa and is now at Harvard Rabbinical School.

The second success story is of a single mother who was a transfer student. She is a member of the Living Scholars Program and currently working in the Public Relations Department of the college. She is already getting interviews in the public relations field even in these tough economic times.

Dr. Kiss brought these stories before the Committee to show how students of private colleges are smart investments to the State of Georgia and how they make a difference. Dr. Kiss said that students that attend private Georgia colleges save the State money. The State gives less money to private institutions than to State institutions. For example, a University of Georgia student receives about \$6,000 while a student in a private institution receives only \$2,500. Dr. Kiss encouraged the Committee to support another increase in HOPE for private institutions and preserve the Tuition Equalization Grant.

Dean C. Collins of Atlanta Christian College spoke and agreed with Dr. Kiss that private colleges are good investments. Atlanta Christian College is comprised of 90% Georgia residents. 52% of the student body is Caucasian and the remaining 48% are minority. 319 students are recipients of Pell Grants showing that it is a misconception that a student at a private institution is from the higher income bracket. Any

cuts make a huge difference for the student body; in fact 50 students did not come to the school because they came up short of funding. Any further reductions will impact all private college students.

President Collins brought up student successes such as Chris, a native Georgia business major who traveled to Uganda and was so motivated he started a non-profit pig farm for the country. More than 50% of business majors are small business owners or work in Georgia businesses and most all of the Early Childhood education majors continue to work in Georgia. President Collins advised the Committee to not underestimate the economic impact of the students from private institutions.

Chairman Harp thanked the two presidents for attending the meeting and all the hard work they do. Chairman Harp then introduced Chancellor Erroll B. Davis, Jr. of the University System of Georgia and Amanda Seals, Director of Government Relations for the University System of Georgia.

Chancellor Davis welcomed the new Senators to the Committee and everyone back for the 2009 session. The Chancellor stressed the importance of education and his appreciation for the work of the committee. He invited the Committee members to come to him or Ms. Seals with any questions or concerns. He stated that the University System was working on better responses and response time. The Chancellor explained that the University System of Georgia consists of 283,000 students and 40,000 employees.

Chairman Harp thanked the Chancellor and introduced Laura Gammage of the Technical College System of Georgia.

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Chairman Harp thanked everyone for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

## SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in the Mezzanine of the State Capitol on February 4, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman  
Cowser of the 46<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman  
Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary  
Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Crosby of the 13<sup>th</sup>

Note: Senator Chance of the 16<sup>th</sup>, Senator Golden of the 8<sup>th</sup>, Senator Orrock of the 36<sup>th</sup>, and Senator Thompson of the 5<sup>th</sup> were absent

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and stated that it was necessary to keep a timely, agenda structured meeting so that all the bills could be discussed and all witnesses were given an opportunity to speak.

### **SR 96 (Grant, 25<sup>th</sup>) Georgia Military College**

Senator Grant of the 25<sup>th</sup> presented **SR 96**. Senator Grant explained that the resolution serves two purposes. The first urges the Board of Trustees to continue funding Georgia Military College. Georgia Military College was “created to educate young men and women in an environment which fosters the qualities of good citizenship.” The second designates Georgia Military College as the State of Georgia Military Junior College. It is the only one that offers the two year military program.

Senator Douglas made the motion that **SR 96 “do pass.”** Senator Lester Jackson seconded the motion. **SR 96** passed by unanimous vote.

Note: Senator Chance came into the meeting.

**SB 45 (Harp, 29<sup>th</sup>) Nursing Education Programs**

Senator Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup> deferred presentation of **SB 45** to Les Snyder, DeVry, Inc., who brought this legislation to the Senator's attention. The purpose of the bill is to apply the same standard for all nursing schools nationwide as it does for other accredited state schools. Mr. Snyder cited lines 27-34, stating these are the main points of the bill.

Note: Senator Orrock came into the meeting.

Mr. Snyder stated that it does not change any other criteria. The bill allows more schools to come to Georgia to help with the nursing shortage that is being experienced by the State. Lines 33-34 allow a hospital to start a nursing school as long as they get the accreditation from the regional agency. This is the "gold standard". Only 2200 nurses graduated last year which does not come close to meeting the demand. The bill will allow schools such as DeVry and Herzing to set up nursing programs in the State. This proposal could add 10% more nurses into schools. The bill attempts to help people from Georgia have space to get into nursing school. Mr. Snyder pointed out to the Committee that the state wins on all issues with this bill; more tax revenue for the state; more nurses to fill the state's shortages; and when students must leave the state for education, statistics show that a great percentage of them never return to the state to work.

Note: Senator Curt Thompson came into the meeting.

Chairman Harp thanked Mr. Snyder for his hard work and asked for questions or discussion.

Senator Chance made the motion that **SB 45 "do pass."** Senator Orrock seconded the motion. **SB 45** passed by unanimous vote.

Senator Douglas requested to address the Committee and Chairman Harp agreed. Senator Douglas handed out an article that was copied from the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, February 3, 2009, entitled "Sex expertise in budget crossfire". This article addressed the fact that sex

expertise faculty were employed at Georgia State University. Senator Douglas questioned why a Veteran's Home was closed because of the budget but these people were still being paid.

Tom Daniel, Vice-Chairman for the Board of Regents, was called to speak about the issue. He stated that the people in question were employed by the University as professors and that no class is taught on the subjects mentioned in the article, specifically oral sex and male prostitution. Their expertise is used for research purposes.

Senator Orrock pointed out that these experts do research for alcohol, drugs and teenage prostitution. These people are invaluable in helping in the discovery of cures and treatments and that this is common practice to have these types of experts in the academic community.

Chairman Harp thanked Mr. Daniel and asked that the discussion end there.

### **SB 49 (Hawkins, 49<sup>th</sup>) GA Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act**

Senator Hawkins of the 49<sup>th</sup> presented **SB 49** which he stated would ensure the integrity of long distance nursing education. He stated that this bill is backed by the Governor's Office and approved by the Governor's Executive Council. Senator Hawkins explained the main points of the bill. The main section states that an applicant or licensure by examination or licensure by endorsement obtains a degree from an out-of-state school or is applying for a nursing degree to become a Registered Nurse in the State of Georgia. They must participate in a program that is a part of an institution of higher education that is approved by an appropriate regulatory authority of this State. An institution must hold a regional special accreditation recognized by the United States Secretary of Education and requires the program applicants to be licensed in practical vocational nursing. This would also include Military Service Corpsman and Paramedics who hold a degree in clinically oriented healthcare fields who demonstrate experience providing direct patient care. Such schools require

their assessments of nursing knowledge and board recognized license exams at a rate equivalent to those of approved programs in Georgia. Excelsior is one of these schools.

Senator Hawkins went on to say that Excelsior was founded with support from the Kellogg foundation to provide a competency-based alternative path for nursing education. It is recognized as one of the thirteen centers of nursing excellence in the United States. Its graduates pass the national council of state boards of nursing licensure at an 88 percent rate which is higher than national average. Last year the Georgia Legislature passed HB 1041 which requires applicants for Registered Nurse licensure by endorsement to graduate from a program approved by the Georgia Board of Nursing. The criteria are similar to and not less stringent than those established by the Board. This criterion has been designed for traditional nursing programs and not assessment-based programs. Senator Hawkins went on to say that the Georgia Board of Nursing questioned the clinical competency of these graduates yet the hospitals that employ these graduates are more than pleased with their abilities. Senator Hawkins then explained that he wrote this bill at the request of the North Georgia Medical Center and the students that had become engaged in this issue.

Senator Hawkins shared some minutes from a December 19, 2008 meeting he attended where doctors praised the work of some of the Excelsior graduates. He quoted Dr. James Bailey as saying, "Excelsior graduates that I have worked with are outstanding students in terms of clinical management and management skills. They were self-directing and independent, two characteristics essential in clinical care." Senator Hawkins stated that Dr. Bailey expressed concerns with the decision by the Board of Nursing, given the nursing shortage and the lack of viable alternatives offered by the Board.

Dr. James Bailey, not related, graduated from Excelsior (then know as Regents) in the eighties and worked for six years as a Registered Nurse before attending the Medical College of Georgia. He stated he personally recommends this program to LPN colleagues.

Senator Hawkins stated that he had learned just this day that there are presently over 1100 Excelsior students in the State of Georgia. The cost of the program is six to nine thousand dollars, the average age of a student is 49, and most students are married with children. Senator Hawkins stated that he found it very interesting that the discussion with the Georgia Board of Nursing revolved around clinical experience when most of these students had more clinical experience than traditional Registered Nurse students. He added that there is a critical shortage of nurses in this state; it is not time to close down a source of nurses moving into this state or training in our own hospitals. Senator Hawkins thanked the Committee and urged their support of the legislation.

Senator Curt Thompson asked whether there was any direct negative evidence to show Excelsior graduates are not competent. Senator Hawkins stated that he knew of no data to suggest that.

Senator Orrock thanked Senator Hawkins for bringing the bill before the Committee and commented that the Kellogg Foundation had acknowledged this institution. The stature of that foundation makes this a significant contribution. Senator Orrock said she was quite impressed. Senator Hawkins stated that he was very impressed to find the Kellogg Foundation expressed approval as he held study committees on nursing shortages in Georgia. He said that the nurses he had talked to were very glad for the opportunity to get to the hospitals and they felt they learn more in the hospital setting. Senator Orrock stated that the population of Emergency Medical Technicians and others heading into the medical field for full-time employment is growing. Senator Hawkins agreed and stated it was an additional way to get nurses into the Registered Nursing occupation and provides a way to advance within the field.

Senator Lester Jackson asked if the College is strictly online courses. Senator Hawkins deferred the question to others for an answer.

Chairman Harp thanked Senator Hawkins and requested that he remain available for any further questions that might come up in the discussion.

Laurie Nagelsmith, Assistant Dean at Excelsior College, was recognized. She thanked the Committee for having her there and stated that she was in support of the passage of this legislation. She stated that Senator Hawkins had made a great presentation showing the need for this bill. Ms. Nagelsmith further explained that the problem lies with the Georgia Nursing Board who had applied the HB 1041 rule to the contemporary assessment-based programs and determined that Excelsior's programs are less stringent. The Board had done so without any evidence and with over 1000 graduates working in the State of Georgia. The graduates are not less qualified. Without the passage of SB 49, 1100 current graduates and even more future students would not be able to obtain licensure. Ms. Nagelsmith addressed Senator Lester Jackson's question and stated that it is a different methodology and is not correspondence or online based. The curriculum is competency-based and examinations are taken at a secure testing center with clinical competency as a requirement equating to the students' total assessment. The students at Excelsior are required to take the same rigorous nursing exam as other programs, called the Capstone test, and in the Excelsior program, the faculty-to-student ratio is one-to-one. The nursing faculties are either masters or doctoral graduates of nursing. The program's Registered Nurse passage rate is higher than the national average. 80 percent of those enrolled are already LPN or Military Corpsmen.

Senator Douglas asked if the Corpsmen are trained to become such or if they come to Excelsior as trained Corpsmen. Ms. Nagelsmith clarified that they are at a certain level when they apply for admission to the school and these Corpsmen must meet all levels of requirements set forth for admission.

Senator Orrock asked what other states admitted Excelsior students as practicing Registered Nurses. Ms. Nagelsmith stated that there are Excelsior students working in all 50 of the States and 37 States now license Excelsior students. Ms. Nagelsmith explained that there are over 36,000 associate

degree nurses across the nation. She stated that this program is not for everyone and is tailored to self-directed and goal-oriented people.

Senator Crosby asked how the competency of the nurses who graduate is determined. Ms. Nagelsmith stated that all graduates must pass the Capstone exam just as other students from any nursing schools.

Chairman Harp thanked Ms. Nagelsmith for her testimony and then recognized Cindy Balskra from the Georgia Nursing Association.

Ms. Balskra began by stating that she is a working Registered Nurse and that the GNA supports this legislation. She noted that Georgia ranks in the top ten in the country in terms of nurse demand, according to the recent Staton survey. Ms. Balskra stated that GNA believes the Georgia Board of Nursing is only focused on the Excelsior College program because of their different approach to training. The Georgia Nursing Association advocates for quality healthcare and they only support quality nursing. Current practicing Registered Nurses and Licensed Practicing Nurses support graduates of Excelsior College and see them as equally competent. The GNA has received hundreds of letters of support corroborating this fact which she presented as evidence to the Committee. Ms. Balskra stated that, on a personal level, she would never have a problem with an Excelsior graduate Registered Nurse caring for her or a member of her family.

Chairman Harp asked Ms. Balskra if she had the authority to speak for the Georgia Nursing Association and she replied yes. He also inquired where Ms. Balskra attended school. She replied that she graduated from Villa Maria College in Pennsylvania which was a traditional brick-and-mortar nursing school.

Chairman Harp asked if anyone had any added testimony in support of Excelsior. Deb Bailey, Director of Government Affairs at Northeast Georgia Medical Center, requested that one of her graduates that missed the deadline for licensure be allowed to speak on behalf of the bill. Chairman Harp asked

that, in the interest of time, we forgo her testimony at this time. Chairman Harp asked Ms. Bailey where she attended nursing school. She stated that she graduated from a traditional nursing school, Medical College of Georgia.

Chairman Harp then requested opposition testimony. Dee Keeton, President of the Georgia Board of Nursing and Linda Herron, former President of the Georgia Board of Nursing, spoke to the bill.

Ms. Keeton stated that SB 49, if enacted, will restrict and limit the Board's authority to regulate nursing education programs in the State. This bill will require extensive changes that will allow programs which have never met Georgia's high standards, and they personally frighten her. Ms. Keeton stated that this Bill will allow programs with no supervised nursing clinical experience in hospitals, eliminating hands-on training. Ms. Keeton clarified that the Board has no monetary interest in the Bill; their job is to protect the public. She stated that the Board cannot and must not compromise on competency or lower the standards. She stated the Board sympathizes with the approximately 1100 nursing students who were caught in the middle by the passage of HB 1041 and the Board is setting up meetings to address the problem. In fact, the Board has passed a waiver program for those Excelsior graduates and a few are already applying for the waiver.

Linda Herron, past President of the Georgia Board of Nursing, reiterated that Georgia is not a reporting State as it pertains to nursing mistakes and incidents, so the Board cannot supply data to support or refute the competency of any nurses, including Excelsior graduates. She recommended that the Committee strike two measures from the bill. The first would be "meet such other criteria as established by the Board." She said that by taking that from the OCGA it would throw out all the education rules that the Board has established. The second concern she had with the bill was the statement on the bottom of page 3 describing the categories for possible admittance to the Excelsior program including Licensed Practicing Nurses, Paramedics and other clinically-oriented healthcare degrees. The "other clinically-oriented healthcare degrees" were particularly worrisome to Ms. Herron because it

allowed a “large array” of applicants from many degrees that could have little to do with actual healthcare. She also stated that the Board has no financial interest in the Bill and that the Georgia Nursing Association only speaks for a small portion of the nursing community of Georgia.

Senator Douglas stated that experts were testifying from both sides of the matter and he would like to know who they felt the Committee should listen to and why. Ms. Keeton replied that the Board of Nursing wants to be allowed to set the criteria for admittance to the Registered Nursing program. This bill would set the criteria, not the Board. She stated that the bill would allow the Legislature to lower requirements and strips the authority of the Board.

Senator Lester Jackson asked about the waiver program that the Board has in place for getting licensure for the Excelsior students who are caught in the middle. Ms. Keeton stated that this waiver was put in place when the Board realized that HB 1041 left approximately 1100 Excelsior graduates without a means to get Registered Nursing licensing. She stated that 19 students had actually completed the process. Senator Lester Jackson asked if there is still a way for these students to get licensure in Georgia if the Legislature does not act on this bill. Ms. Keeton answered yes but the option is only available to the students that were caught in the HB 1041 rule change.

Senator Chance asked if any Excelsior graduates have been licensed by the Board in the past. Ms. Keeton said that initially the law read there was a “back door” way for Excelsior graduates to get licensure by way of taking the NCLEX (the National Registered Nursing Exam) in another state and then coming back to Georgia and obtaining licensure in Georgia. She said that HB 1041 closed that loophole and now everyone who practices in Georgia must graduate from a traditional school of nursing.

Senator Chance expressed concerns about the extreme nursing shortage as expressed by the Georgia Nursing Association and hospitals across the state.

He asked why this could not be a source for more nurses, especially since no data showed negative results. Senator Chance stated that he wanted to go on record that he disagreed with the stance that the Board of Nursing was taking.

Senator Orrock then asked why, if there has been a problem since 1985, as someone had testified, the Board has not taken a stand before now and worked through those problems. The second part of her question was why the Board feels this program is not sound if 37 other states accept it and there is not any conclusive data to oppose it.

Chairman Harp requested that in the interest of time the discussion keep moving and recognized Senator Curt Thompson who asked Ms. Keeton to clarify that the waivers would be capped at the 1100 students. She stated yes. Senator Curt Thompson then asked Ms. Balskra if the 37 states that allow Excelsior graduates to be licensed Registered Nurses, have more requirements for their Excelsior students than Georgia does. Ms Balskra stated that she was not aware of any but could not say for certain.

Chairman Harp asked if anyone else wished to speak in opposition to the bill. There being none, he requested that Senator Hawkins close the discussion.

Senator Hawkins stated that he felt there had been good points raised in the discussion and thanked everyone for their attention and concerns. He stated that he supports the Georgia Board of Nursing; they just merely disagree on this point.

Chairman Harp thanked Senator Hawkins and asked if there was a motion. Senator Orrock made the motion that **SB 49** “do pass.” Senator Chance seconded the motion. [SB 49](#) passed by unanimous vote.

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There being no further business, Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

## SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in the Mezzanine of the State Capitol on February 11, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman  
Cowsert of the 46<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman  
Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary  
Chance of the 16<sup>th</sup>  
Orrock of the 36<sup>th</sup>  
Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Crosby of the 13<sup>th</sup>

Note: Senator Golden of the 8<sup>th</sup> and Senator Thompson of the 5<sup>th</sup> were absent.

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Chairman Harp opened the meeting by saying that [SR 84](#) **would be tabled**. The Chairman went on to explain that a study committee was being recommended on the issue of merging the historically black colleges in the University System of Georgia. He and Senator Emanuel Jones of the 10<sup>th</sup> have authored a resolution recommending the assembly of a study committee to delve further into these recommendations.

### [SR 140](#) (Jones, 10<sup>th</sup>) Senate Study Committee on Consolidation of Institutions of Higher Education

Senator Jones presented **SR 140**. He explained the resolution and gave the purpose citing the need to look further into the issue of merging the historically black colleges and universities. He concluded and asked if there were any questions.

Chairman Harp announced that a substitute had been written and it was the resolution the Committee had in their packets. The change in the resolution involved the language about the payment of those serving on the Study Committee. The intent of the resolution would not be changed.

Senator Lester Jackson asked how many meetings this study committee would be conducting. Chairman Harp stated that the language of the resolution stated no more than five meetings could be held.

Senator Douglas made a motion that **SR 140 “do pass by substitute”**. Senator Chance seconded the motion. [SR 140](#) passed by unanimous vote.

### **[HB 157](#) (Harbin, 118<sup>th</sup>) Lottery Shortfalls Triggering Reductions in HOPE Scholarship Benefits**

In the absence of Rep. Harbin, Chairman Harp presented **HB 157**. He stated that HOPE recipients currently receive \$150 per semester/ \$100 per quarter as a book allowance and \$300 per year. However, under current law, if the year-end balance of the unexpanded and uncommitted funds in the Lottery for Education Account is lower than the year before, the book allowance must be reduced to no more than \$150 per year. This applies to a shortfall of just one dollar. If there is a shortfall the following year the book allowance is eliminated. If there is a shortfall for an additional year then the scholarship and grants for the mandatory fees are also eliminated.

HB 157 would preserve the book allowance and mandatory fees unless there is a substantial shortfall. Under HB 157, if a year-end balance is less than 92% of the highest year-end balance since FY 2004, then the book allowance must be reduced to no more than \$150 per year. If the year-end balance of any subsequent FY is less than 84 percent of the highest year end balance, then the book allowance must be eliminated. Lottery-funded programs currently have reserves of over \$960 million, which is sufficient to fund these programs for another year.

Chairman Harp went on to say that there is currently no emergency in HOPE funding sufficient to warrant the elimination or reduction of these benefits. However, it is predicted that lottery revenues will fall short of the expense in the program by FY 2010, triggering the current law's reduction of the book allowance and mandatory fees. There are over 200,000 HOPE recipients this year.

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There being no questions, Senator Orrock made the motion that **HB 157 “do pass”**. Senator Lester Jackson seconded the motion.

Senator Cowser asked if there was any connection between these scholarships and the Pre-K funding. Specifically, would this bill mandate that money be taken from the Pre-K funding to be given to HOPE. Chairman Harp and Senator Chance agreed that when they were briefed on the Georgia Lottery, growth in the program was still surprisingly steady, even in today's economy. Chairman Harp moved the previous question.

[HB 157](#) passed by unanimous vote. Chairman Seth Harp will sponsor **HB 157** in the Senate.

There being no further business, Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

## SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in the Mezzanine of the State Capitol on February 18, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman  
Cowser of the 46<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman  
Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary  
Chance of the 16<sup>th</sup>  
Golden of the 8<sup>th</sup>  
Orrock of the 36<sup>th</sup>  
Thompson of the 5<sup>th</sup>  
Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Crosby of the 13<sup>th</sup>

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

Chairman Harp called on Georgia State University to address the Committee regarding the article entitled "Sex Expertise in Budget Crossfire" found in the February 3, 2009, edition of the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*.

Donald Reitzes, Chairman of the Georgia State University Sociology Department, thanked the Chairman and Committee for giving them time to answer the article. He stated that he had been with the University since 1977 and was trained in physiological social psychology. He said that the sociology department at GSU has 23 faculty members who taught in three major areas: urban and race; family health and life; and gender and sexuality. The department has more than 500 undergraduate students, 25 master's degree candidates, and 50 doctoral candidates. Dr. Reitzes stated that the department is interested in social issues, the social process and institutions as organizations that influence behavior. He said that his colleagues' fields of expertise are a logical perspective and while they are experts in areas of sex, they are first and foremost sociologists. They are using their research in these areas to inform and gather statistics in the normal tradition of a research institution.

Kirk Elifson, retired professor and former chairman of the department, stated that he had been with GSU since 1972 and has a PhD from Vanderbilt University. He explained that his work within the field of sexuality was primarily in the areas of social and health issues. His work regarding male prostitution was federally funded after the CDC requested he do this research. He had previously worked with the State Department and studied in Vietnam. He said that he was traditionally a methodologist and does survey research, in-depth interviews and focus groups. He works extensively in the Atlanta area and is an expert in violence and substance abuse; specializing in heroin, methamphetamines and ecstasy.

Dr. Mindy Stompler, Senior Lecturer and Director of Instruction of Social Inequality, Sexuality and Qualitative Methods, stated that she is an expert on oral sex but does not teach a class on oral sex. She said that her main purpose at GSU is teaching. The research she has done on oral sex, as pertaining to society and the spreading of disease, has been on her own time and not specifically for any class. She said that she teaches about 500 students a year. Professor Stompler studied the topic and because of that she volunteered to be put in the press book for GSU. She stated that in our society oral sex is often misconceived by teenage and college students as "abstinence". Often this activity is performed with multiple partners and considered casual. All sexually transmitted diseases can be transferred through oral sex and it is estimated that over 50% of 15-19 year olds have had oral sex. Nationally, one in four girls has a sexually transmitted disease and Georgia has one of the highest rates of sexually transmitted disease incidences in the nation. Dr. Stompler said she studies exactly what messages teens get about oral sex and how these messages are interpreted. She believes that oral sex is the gateway to intercourse and in studying society as a sociologist she cannot ignore this type of information and its importance.

Senator Douglas questioned how the state can afford to pay experts in these fields considering the current budget crisis.

Mr. Elifson stated that most of the research that is done is federally funded through grants and not a state expense. The teaching that is done is the only state money that the professors are paid.

Senator Douglas argued that Federal money is taxpayer money and that Veterans are being forced out of nursing homes and hospitals while this continues. Chairman Harp stated that the question had been answered.

Senator Lester Jackson asked how prostitution and the underground practice of underage sex trade could be prevented by this research.

Mr. Elifson said that indeed there is a prostitution problem in the United States and that the CDC has contracted him to work on the subject. He started work on this in 1987. He said that he was proud to report that much of the work he has done has helped with interventions, trying to make a difference in child prostitution and slave trading. His question back to the Committee was, "if the research is not done, how can policy be made?" He contends the most important thing to come from the research is the saving of lives.

Senator Orrock asked Mr. Elifson to further clarify his work in the armed forces and in Vietnam.

Mr. Elifson stated that he was contacted by the State Department when he was in Vietnam because of his previous background in social studies and survey research as well as his fluency in Vietnamese. He was a combat intelligence officer in the war and because some officers (about 10%) were going to male prostitutes, he was contracted to do a study. The problem for the military was the outbreak of sexually transmitted diseases.

Senator Orrock thanked Mr. Elifson for his work in Vietnam and his service to our country. She further stated that the research that is being done by GSU is essential to the safety of Americans.

Senator Crosby asked how this research is distributed and to whom.

Mr. Elifson stated he has published articles in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. He also has a series of articles in the *American Journal of Public Health*. He stated that one of the most staggering works uncovered is that men who are transvestite prostitutes have an HIV rate of 70%. Everything he wrote he reported in a number of outlets to get as much information out to the public as possible.

Chairman Harp thanked Georgia State University for their time and their willingness to come before the Committee.

#### **SR 173 (Jackson, 2<sup>nd</sup>)    Teacher Education Programs**

Senator Lester Jackson spoke to **SR 173** and explained the reasons to increase teacher education programs in Georgia Institutions and Universities. He said that because Georgia now requires four years of math and science for graduation, there is an increased demand for certified teachers in these fields. In 2007, Georgia colleges produced only three physics teachers. According to State School Superintendent Kathy Cox, Georgia will need over 1,000 new science teachers by 2012, yet only 96 graduated from the University System of Georgia in 2007.

Senator Lester Jackson then said that approximately one-fourth of Georgia's teachers have more than 20 years experience, placing them close to retirement. Additionally, approximately one-third of new teachers leave the profession within their first five years.

Senator Lester Jackson concluded by saying that overall, according to the Professional Standards Commission, in the year 2012, Georgia will need 28,749 teachers to meet growth and replacement demands. Senator Lester Jackson urged the Committee to vote favorably for this resolution.

Senator Golden made a motion that **SR 173** "do pass." Senator Orrock seconded the motion. **SR 173** passed by unanimous vote.

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There being no further business, Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 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 4, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

The following Senators were present:

Cowsert of the 46<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman  
Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary  
Orrock of the 36<sup>th</sup>  
Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Crosby of the 13<sup>th</sup>

Note: Senator Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Senator Chance of the 16<sup>th</sup>, Senator Golden of the 8<sup>th</sup>, and Senator Thompson of the 5<sup>th</sup> were absent

Vice-Chairman Cowsert called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m.

### **SR 422 (Mullis, 53<sup>rd</sup>) Georgia Lottery Corporation and the Georgia HOPE Program**

Senator Mullis introduced **SR 422**. He stated that SR 422 urges the Lottery Board to develop methods to increase revenue for HOPE and Pre-K programs. The lottery revenue has started to cross over the acceptable line of reserve and is beginning to decline. Expenditures for HOPE and Pre-K continue to grow at a rate higher than 6 percent annually; spending will exceed revenue generated by the lottery as early as 2010. Senator Mullis urged the committee to adopt SR 422.

Senator Lester Jackson asked Senator Mullis if he agreed that the State had suffered declining revenues. Senator Mullis agreed that Georgia is in dire straits and that revenue has declined. Senator Lester Jackson asked Senator Mullis if it is true that new revenue needs to be found to help Georgia students fund college programs. Senator Mullis agreed and clarified that this Resolution is asking the Board of Regents to continue to research new ways to add revenue for students.

Senator Douglas asked Senator Mullis if the lottery revenue has flat lined at this point. Senator Mullis said that he cannot speak on that specifically but he sees that the lines on the graphs are crossing and feels that this is a time to begin to look into other sources of funding for students.

Senator Orrock thanked Senator Mullis for bringing this to the forefront. She stated that she felt that most were unaware of the declining lottery revenue. She further stated that tuitions are continuing to rise which will further increase lottery expenditures. Senator Mullis agreed that this is a step to try and improve revenue for the scholarship programs. Senator Orrock stated that technology education was included with the induction of the lottery program and Senator Mullis agreed that technology education needs to be further funded, as it is essential to competition on a global stage.

Chairman Cowser asked what specific programs Senator Mullis was suggesting for new income. He questioned whether this would include higher priced games, additional scratch-off games or casino-type gambling. Senator Mullis stated that he did not have specific suggestions but wanted to urge the Lottery Commission to explore new means of revenue to boost the HOPE and Pre-K Programs.

Senator Mullis further explained that this Resolution requests that the Board provide the Senate with a report outlining the Board's review and conclusions.

Senator Orrock made a motion that **SR 422 "do pass"**. Senator Lester Jackson seconded the motion. [SR 422](#) passed by unanimous vote.

**[SB 231](#) (Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>) Establish the PROMISE III Teacher's Scholarship**

Senator Weber introduced **SB 231**. Senator Weber stated that this bill is a result of a study committee chaired by himself and Representative Brooks Coleman that dealt with teacher training and certification. The study committee had been comprised of persons representing several agencies and policymakers. One recommendation was to try and encourage and give incentive to earn alternative certification. This recommendation evolved into SB 231, which provides a scholarship to students for use in acquiring certification. This is patterned after existing legislation, which is found in an earlier Code Section, and known as the "Promise Teacher Scholarship." If a teacher is enrolled in a teaching program

and they commit to teach for a certain period of time, scholarships for higher education are available. Promise II provides scholarships for professionals in other fields to enter the field of teaching. Senator Weber explained that Promise III is for teachers who have moved into other careers and want to return to teaching. Promise III assists them in acquiring additional teacher certification.

NOTE: Chairman Harp came into the meeting.

NOTE: Senator Douglas left the meeting.

Chairman Harp asked for questions and Senator Orrock began by asking about alternative teacher education and funds availability. Specifically, she requested the required dollar amount given today's limited pot of money. Senator Weber stated it would be in the millions of dollars. He further explained that these are "service cancellable loans." The alternative teacher certifications are a way to get teaching certification if a person works in a professional field. The study committee recommended that the requirements be relaxed and that alternative certification be offered. This bill allows for the alternative certification and can be earned in approximately six months. The scholarships take care of incidental costs associated with taking and performing in an alternative teacher education program.

Senator Cowsert asked if this funding would draw from an already strapped HOPE funding source and were the Promise I and Promise II programs already being funded by HOPE. Senator Weber stated that he could not speak for the funding of the current Promise programs.

Fatimot Ladipo, Georgia Student Finance Commission was asked to answer questions about funding for the programs. She stated that they are funded through existing lottery funds.

Senator Lester Jackson asked what would happen if an individual left the field of teaching without repaying the funds, and if there is a method in place for getting that money back to the State. Ms. Ladipo responded that they are set up as service cancellable loans so the service will repay the loan. If a student or individual decides not to teach they will be subject

to normal loan interest according to the promissory note that was signed at the outset of the contract.

Senator Lester Jackson asked what percentage of students takes these Promise loans and stays in the field of teaching. Senator Weber and Ms. Ladipo agreed that most all of the students “keep their promise”.

Senator Lester Jackson asked where the money would come out of the appropriated lottery funds and how this would impact other programs. Ms. Ladipo clarified that the same money will be used for Promise III that was being used for Promise I and II, so this will not be taking more from the Lottery Fund, but will be limiting the amount each phase receives.

Chairman Harp thanked Senator Weber and Ms. Ladipo for their presentation to the Committee and thanked Senator Weber for the hours of work represented by this bill.

Senator Lester Jackson made a motion that **SB 231 “do pass”**. Senator Crosby seconded the motion. Senator Lester Jackson and Senator Crosby voted in favor of the bill, and, Senator Orrock and Senator Cowsert voted against the passage of the bill. Chairman Harp voted yea, and **SB 231** passed by a 3 to 2 vote.

**SB 238 (Harp, 29<sup>th</sup>) Establish additional types of assistance for medical and dental students attending the Medical College of Georgia**

Chairman Harp presented **SB 238** to the Committee and explained that the bill authorizes the Board of Regents to grant service cancelable loans to medical and dental students at the Medical College of Georgia to cover portions of their tuition cost. The idea behind this bill is to get Georgia medical students to stay and practice in Georgia or to return to Georgia to practice following their residency. If a person takes advantage of this and does not complete the service tied to the loans, twice the amount of the loan will have to be paid back.

Senator Lester Jackson asked about line 26 on page 2 of the bill which states that students have to pay the loan back with service. He requested that Chairman Harp clarify that portion. Chairman Harp stated that students taking the service loans must pay the loan back through service in a Georgia hospital.

Senator Cowsert asked if it were legal to require a student to pay off two times the loan amount. Chairman Harp stated that this is only in the case of those who take this loan and leave the state. The primary goal of the legislation is to provide incentive for students to study medicine in Georgia and then to remain in Georgia to practice.

Senator Lester Jackson asked if it were true that many graduates of the Medical College of Georgia go to the metro-Atlanta area to practice medicine. Chairman Harp stated that he believes that to be true and that both the metro area and the State as a whole are in dire need of doctors. Chairman Harp went on to say that the Senate Higher Education Committee has had numerous requests to try and find incentives for medical and dental students over the last few years. He said, according to last year's numbers, fifty-two percent of MCG students stay in Georgia while the other forty-eight percent move from the state to practice elsewhere. Chairman Harp said that he felt the money spent on these students now is going down the drain when they practice somewhere besides Georgia.

Senator Crosby stated that he was concerned that the amount to repay in case of default of service was far too much but Chairman Harp stated that this is a way to ensure that the students come back to practice in Georgia.

Senator Orrock asked what other colleges students can attend medical school and get residency. Chairman Harp answered that Morehouse, Mercer, Emory and the University of Georgia all offer medical programs. Senator Orrock wanted to know why the bill was only tailored to the Medical College of Georgia.

Chairman Harp replied that the other schools seemed to be having better success in keeping their students in Georgia for residency and practice.

Senator Lester Jackson asked if other states had better residency programs to pull Georgia students. Senator Harp was not sure if that was the case but again said that this bill would encourage them to return. He said that the intention of this bill was not to discourage students from taking residency in other areas of the country; it was merely to offer loans which are optional and good for both students and Georgia.

Senator Orrock commented that Grady Hospital is an excellent teaching opportunity and actually draws residents from other states and countries. Senator Harp agreed and said that Grady is critical to the training of doctors and suggested that the Legislature should look into ensuring that Grady remains open and on sound financial footing.

Senator Orrock moved that **SB 238, “do pass”**. Senator Cowser seconded the motion. **[SB 238](#)** passed by unanimous vote.

Chairman Harp introduced Anne Sturtevant, Director of Financial Solutions for The College Board to make a presentation to the Committee. Ms. Sturtevant presented “Trends in Higher Education in Georgia”, which included topics such as Postsecondary Enrollment Profiles, College Prices, Revenue Sources, Student Financial Aid and Benefits of Higher Education.

Chairman Harp thanked Ms. Sturtevant for an enlightening presentation and thanked the College Board for all that they do for Georgia. He also introduced Bill Gordon, former Director of External Affairs for Georgia Southern University. Chairman Harp thanked Mr. Gordon for coming and for all of his service to the State of Georgia and the educational process.

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There being no further business Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 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 18, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman  
Cowser of the 46<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman  
Chance of the 16<sup>th</sup>  
Orrock of the 36<sup>th</sup>  
Thompson of the 5<sup>th</sup>  
Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Crosby of the 13<sup>th</sup>

Note: Senator Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup> and Senator Golden of the 8<sup>th</sup> were absent.

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

**HB 93 (Sims, 119<sup>th</sup>) Georgia Medical Center Authority; real property; partial and joint ownership; provide authorization**

Representative Sims introduced **HB 93** to the Committee on behalf of the Georgia Medical Center Authority. She stated that the bill enables the Authority to have additional powers, specifically allowing the Authority to take partial and joint ownership in interests and real property. The bill also allows the Authority to create, acquire and operate nonprofit subsidiaries; to create investment or revolving loan funds using bond money as seed funds; and to invest in equity investments (legal investments for executors or trustees) provided that they are managed by accredited third-parties. The intent is to have the GMCA become a self sustaining organization, rather than a financial burden on the State of Georgia.

Senator Lester Jackson requested clarification of what school would actually come under this bill. Representative Sims clarified that this is a biomedical entity that is located in Augusta and is under the authority of the Medical College of Georgia.

Senator Cowser made a motion that **HB 93 “do pass.”** Senator Lester Jackson seconded the motion. **HB 93** passed by unanimous vote. Senator Lester Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup> will sponsor [HB 93](#) in the Senate.

**[HB 484](#) (O’Neal, 146<sup>th</sup>) HOPE scholarships and grants; dependent children of military personnel; provide**

Representative O’Neal thanked the Committee and stated it was his honor to be presenting **HB 484**. He said that currently children of military personnel are not eligible for the HOPE scholarship unless they meet the one year eligibility requirement. These men and women are under orders and have no choice as to when or where they move. This bill provides an exemption to the rule and makes it possible for the dependent children of military personnel, who are stationed in Georgia, to be eligible to receive a HOPE scholarship. This removes the residency requirement for active duty military personnel only. The parameters and requirements for receiving HOPE scholarships are to be the same.

Senator Orrock asked what the fiscal impact would be to HOPE funding. Representative O’Neal stated that the worst case scenario would be an initial fiscal impact of six million dollars. Representative O’Neal reminded the Committee that the students would gain eligibility under the current law in a year anyway.

Senator Chance made a motion that **HB 484, “do pass”**. Senator Lester Jackson seconded the motion. **HB 484** passed by unanimous vote. Senator Ross Tolleson of the 20<sup>th</sup> will sponsor [HB 484](#) in the Senate.

**[HB 301](#) (Hembree, 67<sup>th</sup>) Changes the name of the State Board of Technical and Adult Education to the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia**

Representative Hembree presented **HB 301**. He stated that this was a housekeeping bill. Last year the legislature changed the name from the Department of Technical and Adult Education to the Technical College System of Georgia. However, the legislature neglected to change the board to

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coincide with the System's new name. The bill simply changes the name of the Board to match the System.

Senator Orrock made a motion that **HB 301 "do pass"**. Senator Lester Jackson seconded the motion. **HB 301** passed by unanimous vote. Chairman Seth Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup> will sponsor [HB 301](#) in the Senate.

**[HB 311](#) (Hembree, 67<sup>th</sup>) Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation; guaranteed educational loans; provide**

Representative Hembree presented **HB 311**. He stated that the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Company works closely with the U.S. Department of Education and that this bill allows the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Company to be a lender of last resort. Georgia would merely serve as a pass-through for money from the Department of Education; there is no state money involved.

Senator Lester Jackson asked how much money was involved. Representative Hembree deferred to Fatimot Ladipo of the Georgia Student Finance Commission to answer Senator Jackson's question.

Ms. Ladipo stated that the amount of money involved depends on whether a school has other lenders. She added that, in most cases, these schools are under Title 1 loans. Chairman Harp added that if there is no federal money for some of these schools then their students have no way to secure financial aid.

Senator Lester Jackson made a motion that **HB 311 "do pass."** Senator Orrock seconded the motion. **HB 311** passed by unanimous vote. Chairman Seth Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup> will sponsor [HB 311](#) in the Senate.

Chairman Harp introduced Dr. Daniel J. Kaufman, President of Georgia Gwinnett College. President Kaufman presented a program to the Committee about the unique aspects of Georgia Gwinnett College and its teaching style, specifically the teacher-student relationship. He also explained the Senate Higher Education Committee

continuing progress and growth of the institution. The groundbreaking for new buildings is under way and they are very proud to be graduating their first freshman class. Dr. Kaufman said that U.S. General David Petraeus would be the guest speaker for the graduation.

President Kaufman stated that he was a Georgia native from Glynn County who attended West Point. He was assigned to combat in Vietnam as a commissioned officer and afterward attended Harvard for his Masters Degree and MIT for his PhD. He was head of the Political Science and Economics Department at West Point until he retired. He said he was delighted to have returned to Georgia.

Senator Lester Jackson asked if GGC intended to be part of the "Brain Train". President Kaufman responded that he indeed foresaw the college as a part of that trust and supports the action. Senator Lester Jackson then inquired about GGC's training programs for teachers and nurses, given the State's shortage in each of these occupations. President Kaufman said that GGC only offers undergraduate degrees at this point but plans on adding graduate classes as soon as possible. Senator Cowser questioned where grants come from since the school has no alumni. President Kaufman stated that they have set up "virtual alumni" that have given many grants and he proudly reported that the school had just received its first seven-figure donation.

Senator Orrock asked about the international nature of the school. President Kaufman replied that, indeed, there are many students from different nationalities but that they cannot get an international student program until they are fully accredited.

Chairman Harp thanked President Kaufman for all that he has done for Georgia Gwinnett College and the State of Georgia.

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There being no further business, Chairman Harp adjourned the  
Committee at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, 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 March 23, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman  
Cowsert of the 46<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman  
Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary  
Golden of the 8<sup>th</sup>  
Orrock of the 36<sup>th</sup>  
Thompson of the 5<sup>th</sup>  
Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Crosby of the 13<sup>th</sup>

NOTE: Senator Chance of the 16<sup>th</sup> was absent.

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

### **HB 313 (Hembree, 67<sup>th</sup>) Quality Basic Education Act; calculating grade point averages**

Representative Hembree introduced **HB 313**. He referred to this as a housekeeping measure for the Georgia Student Finance Commission. The Commission determines HOPE eligibility for students in the State of Georgia. This bill will ensure the continued existence of the Commission. Representative Hembree stated that in 2007 the Georgia Department of Education changed the diplomas for high school students. Georgia no longer issues separate college preparatory and career/technical diplomas. Under this bill, all students enrolled in the ninth grade for the first time by the 2008-2009 school year must have a GPA of at least 3.0 to meet achievement standards for the HOPE scholarship.

Chairman Harp asked how this changed current law. Representative Hembree replied that, under the old system, college preparatory diplomas were reviewed on a 3.2 scale whereas the career technical diplomas were reviewed on a 3.0 scale. This would now make one scale to be used by the Student Finance Commission.

Senator Cowsert asked which scale would now be used under the bill. Representative Hembree replied that the scale would be 3.0.

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March 23, 2009

Senator Orrock made the motion that **HB 313 “do pass”**. Senator Cowser seconded the motion. **HB 313** passed by unanimous vote. Chairman Seth Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup> will sponsor [HB 313](#) in the Senate.

NOTE: Senator Chance came into the meeting.

Chairman Harp explained that HB 475 would not be heard until Representative Cooper could join the meeting.

**[SR 613](#) (Pearson, 51<sup>st</sup>) Appalachian Center for Higher Education at North Georgia College and State University in Dahlonega**

Senator Pearson introduced **SR 613** to the Committee. He explained that SR 613 and [HR 645](#) parallel. HR 645 is being worked on in the House. Senator Pearson explained that this is a resolution that designates the Georgia Appalachian Center for Higher Education at North Georgia College and State University as Georgia’s official Appalachian Center for Higher Education.

Senator Douglas thanked Senator Pearson as a graduate of North Georgia College.

Senator Douglas made a motion that **SR 613 “do pass”**. Senator Chance seconded the motion. [SR 613](#) passed by unanimous vote.

**[SR 627](#) (Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>) Senate Study Committee on the Merger of Georgia Technical and Two-year Colleges**

Senator Douglas explained **SR 627**. He stated that the purpose of this resolution is to set up a study committee to evaluate the potential merger of two-year colleges and technical schools.

Senator Lester Jackson asked how many two-year colleges are in the state and Senator Douglas replied that he was not sure of the numbers but felt they were numerous.

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March 23, 2009

Senator Cowsert made a motion that **SR 627 “do pass.”** Senator Crosby seconded the motion. [SR 627](#) passed by unanimous vote.

Chairman Harp then asked Les Snyder, DeVry, Inc., if he was to understand that all parties had agreed upon the language of [HB 475](#). Mr. Snyder stated that there is a substitute to the bill and felt everyone was satisfied with the language. Chairman Harp then decided to have the substitute sent to each member of the Committee for study and stated that the bill would be brought up at the next meeting.

He stressed that bills of this importance needed to have the substitutes to the Committee in a timely manner.

Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

## SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Senate Higher Education Committee met in Room 450 of the State Capitol on March 25, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

The following Senators were present:

Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman  
Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary  
Golden of the 8<sup>th</sup>  
Jackson of the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Crosby of the 13<sup>th</sup>

Note: Senator Cowser of the 46<sup>th</sup>, Senator Chance of the 16<sup>th</sup>, Senator Orrock of the 36<sup>th</sup> and Senator Thompson of the 5<sup>th</sup> were absent

Chairman Harp called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

### **HB 475 (Cooper, 41<sup>st</sup>) Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act**

Chairman Harp stated that there would be no debate on **HB 475**. He said that this bill had been debated time and time again and that everyone had previously had an opportunity to study the final version. He said that HB 475 now contained components of Senator Hawkins' bill SB 49, Chairman Harp's bill SB 44 and Representative Cooper's bill HB 475.

Senator Douglas made a motion that **HB 475**, "**do pass by substitute**". Senator Jackson seconded the motion. **HB 475** passed by unanimous vote. Chairman Seth Harp of the 29<sup>th</sup> will sponsor **HB 475** in the Senate.

Chairman Harp stated that this would be the last meeting of the Senate Higher Education Committee for the 2009 year. He thanked everyone for their time and efforts. Chairman Harp adjourned the meeting at 4:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Douglas of the 17<sup>th</sup>, Secretary

/s/ Vicki Gibbs, Recording Secretary

April 3, 2009

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 2009 session.

[SR 84](#)  
[SB 220](#)  
[SB 221](#)  
[HB 294](#)

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Vicki Gibbs  
Recording Secretary