

**REVENUE:** No revenue impact

**FISCAL:** Fiscal statement issued

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**Action:** Do Pass with Amendments to the A-Eng. Measure (Printed B-Eng.)

**Vote:** 3 - 2 - 0

**Yeas:** Burdick, Metsger, Devlin

**Nays:** Atkinson, Ferrioli

**Exc.:** -

**Prepared By:** Dana Richardson, Administrator

**Meeting Dates:** 5/29

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Defines virtual public charter school (virtual school) as one that provides online courses. Specifies that definition does not include a public charter school that primarily serves students at a physical location. Specifies requirements for virtual schools. Requires charter school applicants to provide description of and plan for having financial management systems in place. Permits failure to maintain sound financial management systems for two consecutive years to be used as grounds to terminate a charter. Requires virtual school to have on file itemized budget including annual operating expenses and profit margin for any third-party entity contracted with to provide educational services. Specifies applicability of 50 percent residency requirement to all public charter schools operating prior to, on or after effective date of the Act unless waiver has been granted by State Board of Education. Establishes Online Learning Task Force. Specifies task force membership and items to be considered. Directs task force to prepare report and legislation for first special session of the Legislative Assembly occurring in 2010. Sunsets task force upon convening of next regular legislative session. Imposes moratorium on: 1) approval of charters for virtual schools that would be established on or after the effective date of the Act, 2) as of May 1, 2009, the number of students in a virtual school under certain circumstances, and 3) waivers of any provision of public charter school statute for virtual schools. Repeals moratorium as of July 1, 2011. Declares an emergency; effective upon passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Task force requirement to file legislation
- Membership of the task force

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** Prohibits for-profit entity from being employer of public charter school employees if virtual school or its sponsor contracts with a for-profit entity. Provides exception if virtual school or its sponsor has contract with for-profit entity for employment of virtual school employees by for-profit entity on or after effective date of the Act. Specifies that employment contract may not be extended or renewed. Specifies applicability of 50 percent residency requirement to all public charter schools operating prior to, on or after effective date of the Act unless waiver has been granted by State Board of Education. Establishes Online Learning Task Force. Specifies membership of 13 to be jointly appointed by the Senate President and Speaker of the House. Requires task force to prepare report and legislation for first special session of the Legislative Assembly occurring in 2010. Specifies that part 1 of moratorium on approving charter applications applies to virtual schools.

**BACKGROUND:** Current statute establishes requirements for enrollment of students in public charter schools. Public charter schools that offer any online courses are required to have at least 50 percent of their students reside in the district in which the school is located. The State Board of Education has considered waivers to this requirement, but has not standardized guidelines for determining when to grant a waiver.

Requirements of virtual schools under Senate Bill 767-B include: a plan to address improving student learning and meeting academic content standards; performance criteria to measure progress in meeting academic performance goals; a plan to directly and significantly involve each schools' parents and guardians of students as well as professional employees; a budget, business plan and governance plan; an agreement that the school will use an interactive Internet-based technology platform that monitors and tracks student progress and attendance; an agreement to employ only licensed teachers who are highly qualified under federal law; a plan for maintaining student and school records at a

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*This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.*

designated central office; a plan to provide equitable access that ensures each student has computer and printer equipment and is offered an Internet service cost reimbursement arrangement; a plan to provide students' lesson materials in English or the native language of the student under certain circumstances; a plan to conduct educational events at least six times each year; a plan to conduct biweekly meetings between teachers and students either in person or through other means; and a plan to provide face-to-face meetings between teachers and students at least six times a year.