

HB 2262 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education

Action Date: 03/21/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 8-0-1-0

Yeas: 8 - Bowman, Elmer, Hudson, Lively, Mannix, McIntire, Ruiz, Sosa

Exc: 1 - Wright

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/14, 3/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates unspecified amount from General Fund to Higher Education Coordinating Commission for distribution to community colleges and public universities for purposes of hiring benefits navigators. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2023.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of amendment
- Need for additional benefit coordinators per campus

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The Joint Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education (JTUSHE) was a bicameral legislative task force established by House Bill 2590 (2021). The measure charged the task force with visiting public post-secondary institutions of education in order to meet with current, former, and prospective students from underrepresented backgrounds, and with developing policy and funding proposals that focus on increasing the likelihood of student success for underrepresented students in the areas of access, retention, graduation, and entry into the workforce. The task force approved its [Report on Findings and Recommendations for 2023 Legislative Session](#) on December 13, 2022. House Bill 2262 was among the legislation that the task force pre-session filed in accordance with the authority granted by House Bill 2590 (2021).

Many students at institutions of higher education face challenges in affording basic needs while receiving their education. Students have reported higher than average rates of food insecurity. These students may be eligible for need-based public assistance programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medicaid. Additional local programs may offer housing assistance, child care, or financial assistance for textbooks.

House Bill 2835 (2021) required each public institution of higher education to employ a benefits navigator to assist students at the institution in determining eligibility and applying for assistance from benefits programs. The original legislation appropriated \$4,999,150 General Fund for the purpose of hiring benefits navigators.

House Bill 2262 A appropriates an unspecified amount from the General Fund to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to fund benefits navigator positions at public universities and community colleges.