
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 997

AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS AND FACULTY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT AND THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

SUMMARY

The bill increases the number of UConn Board of Trustee (BOT) members from 21 to 25 by adding two additional trustees elected by students and two elected by University Senate members, with the latter restricted from voting on or participating in certain matters. The bill also increases the number of Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) members from 21 to 23 by adding two additional voting student advisory committee members.

Under current law, the BOR includes two non-voting members from the BOR faculty advisory committee. The bill generally converts these positions into voting members, except it prohibits them from voting on matters relating to collective bargaining negotiations or agreements. The bill also prohibits these members from attending or participating in meetings held in executive session about personnel matters; under current law, the BOR chairperson may invite them to executive sessions.

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2021

ADDITIONAL UCONN BOT TRUSTEES

Under existing law, the UConn BOT includes two student members: one elected by undergraduate students and one by graduate students, with the elections of one each in alternate years by July 1.

The bill requires, for the elections held by July 1, 2022, (1) UConn

undergraduate students to elect an additional undergraduate trustee to serve a one-year term and (2) UConn graduate students to elect two graduate students to serve two-year terms (one under existing law and an additional one under the bill). As under existing law, the graduate student members must be enrolled in the School of Law, School of Medicine, School of Dentistry, or School of Social Work, or be a graduate student in a UConn school or college.

These student trustee positions (1) carry two-year terms after their initial terms and (2) must be filled by full-time students for the duration of their terms. Starting in 2024, the bill requires that two members be elected per year, with the graduate and undergraduate positions elected in alternate years.

The bill also requires UConn University Senate members, by November 1, 2021, to elect two trustees from among the elected voting members of the University Senate: one full-time faculty member to serve a term expiring June 30, 2022, and one member to serve a term expiring June 30, 2023. Both trustee positions carry two-year terms after their initial terms, and the successors to the term expiring June 30, 2022, must both be full-time faculty members. The initial full-time faculty member position, and successors to both initial appointments, must be employed by the university for the duration of their terms.

The bill prohibits University Senate-elected members on the UConn BOT from (1) attending or participating in meetings held in executive session about personnel matters or (2) voting on matters relating to collective bargaining negotiations or agreements.

For both the student and University Senate members, any vacancies must be filled by special election for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Under existing law, the BOT also includes (1) 12 trustees appointed by the governor, (2) two trustees elected by alumni, and (3) five ex-officio members.

ADDITIONAL BOR MEMBERS

Under existing law, the BOR's membership includes the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the student advisory committee. The bill increases the number of BOR members from 21 to 23 by adding two additional student advisory committee members: one Connecticut State University System or Charter Oak State College student and one regional community-technical college student. Under the bill, these new members are elected by consensus vote of the advisory committee.

Under existing law, in addition to the student advisory committee and faculty advisory committee members, the BOR also includes (1) nine members appointed by the governor; (2) four appointed by legislative leaders; and (3) four ex-officio, nonvoting members.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 3 (03/11/2021)