



# NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

45 Temple Place, Boston, Massachusetts 02111-1305 ♦ Phone 617.357.9620 ♦ Fax 617.338.1577 ♦ www.nebhe.org

## Fall 2022 Legislative Advisory Committee Meeting Legislative Highlights

### TRANSCRIPT WITHHOLDING LEGISLATION:

4 out of the 6 New England states took legislative action of various kinds on the issue of the transcript withholding practices of higher education institutions during 2022. Bill numbers, summary, and links to the legislation appear along with the legislation's status at time of publication.

- **Connecticut**
  - [CT Senate Bill 0017](#) - AN ACT PROHIBITING AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM WITHHOLDING TRANSCRIPTS
    - **Summary:** Sought to prohibit the use of transcript withholding for student debt in the context of employment-related transcript requests.
    - **Status:** Joint Favorable report out of the Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement; did not advance in the latest legislative session.
- **Massachusetts**
  - [MA House Bill 4552](#) - AN ACT ENSURING STUDENTS' ACCESS TO ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS
    - **Summary:** Sought to prohibit withholding a student's official academic transcript for credits or grades for courses for which students have paid tuition and mandatory course fees.
    - **Status:** Joint Favorable report out of the Committee on Higher Education; referred to House Committee on Ways and Means; did not advance in the latest legislative session.
- **Maine**
  - [ME Legislative Document 1838](#) - AN ACT TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS AND DIPLOMAS
    - **Summary:** Prohibits the withholding of transcripts or diplomas when students request them; allows for the requirement of a repayment plan in the case of debts that exceed \$500 (in the case of a two-year institution) or \$2500 (in the case of a four-year institution), but prohibits institutions requiring students to make a payment on said repayment plan in order to access the requested transcript or diploma. Requires that students have the right to appeal the terms of a repayment plan and mandates that institutions must collect data on the reason a student is requesting the release of their transcript or diploma.
    - **Status:** Passed; Signed into law by Governor Mills on March 31, 2022.
- **Rhode Island**
  - [RI House Bill 7061](#) - AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION [SEE TITLE 16 CHAPTER 97 -- THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACT] (Prohibits a college or university from withholding a student's academic transcript due to outstanding tuition fees.)



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- **Summary:** Sought to prohibit withholding a student's academic transcripts for credits or grades for courses for which students have paid tuition and mandatory course fees.
- **Status:** Referred to the House Committee on Education; Committee recommended further study.

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## 2022 ADDITIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT LEGISLATION:

- **Connecticut**
  - [CT House Bill 5301](#) - AN ACT CONCERNING IN-STATE STUDENT STATUS OF VETERANS, A POSTSECONDARY PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAM OFFICE, THE ROBERTA B. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, FOOD INSECURE STUDENTS AND CHILD CARE CENTERS ON OR NEAR COLLEGE CAMPUSES
    - **Summary:** An omnibus measure that centers student basic needs in the form of child care in proximity to campus and food insecurity. Also establishes a task force to make recommendations to restructure the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship program with an eye toward increasing affordability via need-based financial aid.
    - **Status:** Passed; Signed into law by Governor Lamont on May 24, 2022.
  - [CT Senate Bill 251](#) - AN ACT EXPANDING TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR CAREERS IN HEALTH CARE. To develop initiatives that address the critical shortage of nursing and health care professionals in the state.
    - **Summary:** Tasks the Office of Workforce Strategy to help correct a shortage of critical health care workers by expanding nursing programs and creating initiatives that will support increased access to health care education for those who have either traditionally not been highly represented in the health professions as well as those looking to transition from other fields to the health care sector.
    - **Status:** Passed; Signed into law by Governor Lamont on May 23, 2022.
- **Maine**
  - [ME Legislative Document 1820 \(House Proposal 1353\)](#) - AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE GOVERNANCE OF THE MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM AND UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM
    - **Summary:** An emergency measure that sought to strengthen the board of trustees by adding additional, appointed but non-voting members and add requirements for adjunct faculty and staff representation.
    - **Status:** Vetoed by Governor Mills on April 26, 2022; veto sustained on May 9, 2022.
  - [ME Legislative Document 1978 \(Senate Proposal 709\)](#) - AN ACT TO PROMOTE HOME OWNERSHIP BY REDUCING EDUCATION DEBT
    - **Summary:** Sought to create and fund a program through the Maine State Housing Authority for mortgages and student debt forgiveness for first-time home buyers with educational debt.



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- **Status:** Passed the House and was in the hands of the Senate when the Legislature adjourned Sine Die on May 9, 2022, rendering the measure dead.
- **Massachusetts**
  - [Amendment to Section 15A - Public Education portion of the MA General Laws](#) - INCLUSIVE CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT 4
    - **Summary:** Building on many years of attempts at legislation on this issue (most recently [House Bill 4695](#)), this amendment to the MA General Laws prohibits public institutions of higher education from requiring any of the following for individuals with severe intellectual disabilities: standardized test scores, a high school diploma or equivalent, the meeting of high school course requirements, a passing score on the MCAS (statewide assessment) and imposes new reporting requirements to keep track of the postsecondary participation of students with severe intellectual disabilities. In the FY2023 budget, Governor Baker also allocated an additional \$4 million to support postsecondary participation by such students.
    - **Status:** Passed; this amendment was signed by Governor Baker on July 28, 2022.
  - [MA House Bill 266](#) - AN ACT RELATIVE TO A LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR HUMAN SERVICE WORKERS
    - **Summary:** Sought to create a funding structure and language for a program, to be administered through the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, by which eligible participants could be reimbursed for loan payments in the amount of up to \$1,800 annually for four years.
    - **Status:** Bill reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on House Ways and Means on February 14, 2022; did not advance in the latest legislative session.
- **New Hampshire**
  - [NH House Bill 1530](#) - ESTABLISHING CURRICULAR TRANSFER PATHWAYS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE AND THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
    - **Summary:** Will go into effect in July 2024. Charges the trustees of the community college system and the trustees of the university system of New Hampshire with establishing curricular pathways for vertical transfer.
    - **Status:** Passed; Signed into law by Governor Sununu on May 20, 2022
  - [NH House Bill 1661](#) - RELATIVE TO REGIONAL CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION AGREEMENTS, AN APPROPRIATION FOR PRELIMINARY WORK FOR A NEW LEGISLATIVE PARKING GARAGE, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, ESTABLISHING AN EXTRAORDINARY NEED GRANT FOR SCHOOLS, AND FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS AND INCENTIVES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.



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- **Summary:** An omnibus bill that includes relevant provisions related to facilitating collaboration on scheduling and transportation between district schools and Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers and also creates support for workforce-related affordable housing developments.
  - **Status:** Passed; Signed into law by Governor Sununu on June 29, 2022
- **Rhode Island**
    - [RI House Bill 6603 Sub A](#) - AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- ACCESS TO ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES FOR ALL STUDENTS
      - **Summary:** Amends the Rhode Island Board of Education Act to include a stipulation that all programs at the university must be required to accept for credit Advanced Placement (AP) scores of 3 or higher.
      - **Status:** Passed; Signed into law by Governor McKee on June 27, 2022.
    - [RI House Bill 8092](#) - AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- RHODE ISLAND PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP
      - **Summary:** Sought to expand the postsecondary institutions at which eligible students can use their Rhode Island promise scholarship funds—to go beyond the Community College of Rhode Island and include both public and private-not-for-profit/independent baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions.
      - **Status:** Referred to the House Finance Committee on April 6, 2022; did not advance in the latest legislative session.
  - **Vermont**
    - [VT Senate Bill 11](#) - AN ACT RELATING TO ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
      - **Summary:** The act provides funding and creates program language for an array of efforts to help retain college graduates and enhance workforce development efforts. Included among the enumerated initiatives is a secondary-school-focused industry-recognized Career and Technical Education (CTE) pilot program.
      - **Status:** Passed; Signed into law by Governor Scott on June 8, 2022.
    - [VT Senate Bill 248](#) - AN ACT RELATING TO THE GOVERNANCE OF THE VERMONT STATE COLLEGES AND THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
      - **Summary:** Sought to increase the representation of students on the boards of trustees for the Vermont State Colleges Corporation and the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College. Also sought to add faculty and staff representation onto the board and proposed the adoption of term limits for both boards.
      - **Status:** Referred to the Committee on Education on January 13, 2022; did not advance in the latest legislative session.