

White
Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 2528

House Bill No. 2625*

by deleting all language after the enacting clause and substituting instead the following:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 20, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

49-7-2024. Accreditation.

(a)

(1) Each governing board of a public institution of higher education in this state shall regularly update the institution's policies and practices regarding institutional accreditation to conform with changes made by the United States department of education or by the United States congress.

(2) By December 31, 2024, each governing board of a public institution of higher education in this state shall identify and determine the institutional accrediting agencies or associations eligible to serve as an accreditor. Such institutional accrediting agencies or associations must be recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States department of education.

(3) By December 31, 2024, each governing board of a public institution of higher education in this state shall update the institution's policies and practices regarding accreditation to ensure that the institution may freely choose to pursue accreditation by any accreditor recognized by the United States department of education for the kinds of programs offered by the institution.

(b) An accrediting agency or association shall not compel a public institution of higher education in this state to violate any state law. Any adverse action taken against

a public institution of higher education in this state based, in whole or in part, on the institution's compliance with any state law constitutes a violation of this section that may be enforced in accordance with this subsection (b), but only to the extent that the state law is not preempted by a federal law recognizing the necessity of the accreditation standard or requirement. A public institution of higher education in this state that is negatively affected by a violation of this section may bring a civil action against the accrediting agency or association in a court of competent jurisdiction in this state.

(c) If an accrediting agency or association violates subsection (b), then the governing board of the public institution of higher education shall notify the general assembly in writing within thirty (30) calendar days of the violation.

SECTION 2. The heading in this act is for reference purposes only and does not constitute a part of the law enacted by this act. However, the Tennessee Code Commission is requested to include the heading in any compilation or publication containing this act.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.