

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Council on Postsecondary Education to
2 study the placement and services provided by public universities and community and
3 technical colleges in the Commonwealth.

4 WHEREAS, public universities and community colleges serve as economic
5 development incubators for the cities and regions in which they are located, both by the
6 faculty and staff jobs the colleges provide and the business innovations that can spring
7 from collaborations in the academic environment; and

8 WHEREAS, Kentucky's postsecondary governance structure currently includes the
9 Council on Postsecondary Education as the systemwide coordinating agency charged
10 with developing and implementing a strategic agenda and a system of public
11 accountability for evaluating the performance and effectiveness of the state's
12 postsecondary system. Kentucky's universities are governed by individual boards and a
13 governing board oversees the Kentucky Community and Technical College system and
14 local advisory boards are affiliated with the individual campuses; and

15 WHEREAS, as the Commonwealth has, through the years, located regional
16 universities throughout the state charged by the General Assembly with providing a
17 seamless, integrated system of postsecondary education strategically planned to enhance
18 economic development and quality of life; and

19 WHEREAS, the mission of the community and technical colleges is to work
20 cooperatively with postsecondary institutions throughout the Commonwealth to align
21 program and training programs necessary to develop a workforce with the skills to meet
22 the needs of new and existing industries and improve employability of citizens; and

23 WHEREAS, the southeastern region of Kentucky is conspicuously without a public,
24 residential, four-year university, hindering its ability to make the same economic progress
25 as other regions of the state; and

26 WHEREAS, the southeastern region of Kentucky is being forced to pursue new
27 economic development and workforce strategies due to the decline in the coal industry;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, the Council on Postsecondary Education is statutorily charged with the
3 responsibility to review proposals for the establishment of new four-year colleges; and

4 WHEREAS, the Council on Postsecondary Education is statutorily charged with the
5 responsibility of eliminating or changing existing academic programs to provide
6 consistency and alignment with institutional missions and the state's strategic
7 implementation plan as well as avoiding duplication of programs;

8 NOW, THEREFORE,

9 ***Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

10 ➔Section 1. The Council on Postsecondary Education shall conduct a thorough
11 study of:

12 (1) The structure of higher education governance in the Commonwealth,
13 including the current condition and projected needs of the state over the next 20 years in
14 terms of postsecondary education attainment, workforce, and economic needs. The
15 analysis shall consider: population and demographic trends; economic and workforce
16 conditions and needs; state of college preparation; extent of postsecondary access,
17 completion, and affordability; student learning options; and education finance. The study
18 shall include recommendations on changes needed to the state's postsecondary
19 governance structure that would be essential to meet identified needs and ensure the best
20 delivery of postsecondary educational services to students;

21 (2) The impact and feasibility of establishing a regional, residential, four-year
22 public university in southeastern Kentucky. The study shall include a comprehensive
23 review of the prospect of:

24 (a) Establishing a new regional, residential, four-year public university in
25 southeastern Kentucky and the impact that would have on the existing regional
26 universities in the Commonwealth;

27 (b) Establishing a residential campus in southeastern Kentucky that is a satellite

1 campus of an existing regional public university; and

2 (c) The Commonwealth acquiring an existing, private university in southeastern
3 Kentucky to serve the region as a new regional, residential, four-year public university, as
4 an alternative to establishing an entirely new four-year university; and

5 (3) The feasibility and programmatic and fiscal impacts of having the Kentucky
6 Community and Technical College System continue to be responsible for technical
7 education programs but transferring responsibility for traditional academic subjects to the
8 regional universities. The study shall include a comprehensive review of how this
9 transition might impact each regional university and the potential implications on any
10 proposal for establishing a four-year university in southeastern Kentucky identified in
11 subsection (2) of this section and the potential impact on prospective Kentucky
12 Community and Technical College System students statewide.

13 ➔Section 2. The President of the Council on Postsecondary Education shall report
14 the comprehensive study required by Section 1 of this Joint Resolution with findings and
15 recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission to be distributed to the
16 relevant subject matter committees, including but not limited to the Interim Joint
17 Committee on Economic Development and Workforce Investment and the Interim Joint
18 Committee on Education by December 1, 2023.