The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Carla S. Roberts.

DIGEST 2024 Regular Session

Seabaugh

<u>Proposed law</u> requires that colleges and universities ensure that each student and employee is guaranteed equal protection under the law and the right to be free from discrimination pursuant to present law.

<u>Proposed law</u> prohibits colleges and universities from engaging in the unlawful classification or a grouping of individuals together into a preferred political class based upon race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or any subcategory thereof for the purpose of conferring preferential treatment based upon the individual's classification or group and thereby unlawfully discriminating against those individuals who are not members of the politically preferred class or group.

<u>Proposed law</u> provides that the legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (1) The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution provides that a state is not to deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.
- (2) The U.S. Supreme Court has opined that the Equal Protection Clause represents a foundational principle—the absolute equality of all citizens of the U.S. politically and civilly before their own laws and that the Constitution should not permit any distinctions of law based on race or color because any law which operates upon one person should operate equally upon all, and the 14th Amendment would hold over every American citizen, without regard to color, the protecting shield of law.
- (3) The U.S. Supreme Court further held that eliminating racial discrimination means eliminating all of it. The court further held that the Equal Protection Clause applies without regard to any differences of race, of color, or of nationality—it is universal in its application. The court also held that the guarantee of equal protection cannot mean one thing when applied to one individual and something else when applied to a person of another color. If both are not accorded the same protection, then it is not equal.

<u>Proposed law</u> provides the following definitions:

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- (1) "Employee" means any professor, faculty member, or other person employed by a college or university.
- (2) "Ideological statement" means any written or oral statement discussing the student or employee's views on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or any subcategory thereof or views regarding any theory that advocates for the differential treatment of those groups.

- (3) "Institution of higher education" means public college or university or a college or university that receives state taxpayer funds.
- (4) "Student" means any person who is an applicant or is enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis at a college or university that is public or receives state taxpayer funds.
- (5) "Unlawful classification" means any program, activity, initiative, event, instruction, class assignment, training, activity, or policy that classifies or groups individuals on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or any subcategory thereof for the purpose of promoting a certain group as inherently superior or deserving of preferential treatment. "Unlawful classification" includes the "diversity, equity, and inclusion" program or any other similar program unlawfully classifies individuals for preferential treatment.
- (6) "Unlawful discrimination" is any unlawful classification that results in an individual being deemed inherently inferior or being denied educational opportunities or employment opportunities because of the individual's race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or any subcategory thereof.
- (7) "Self-generated fees" mean those fees that are paid by a student along with tuition when the student enrolls for a semester or course of study.

<u>Proposed law</u> prohibits colleges and universities from engaging in unlawful discrimination, including but not limited to any the following unlawful acts:

- (1) Recruiting or admitting a student based upon an unlawful classification or requiring as a condition of admission that the student submit an ideological statement.
- (2) Recruiting or hiring an employee based upon an unlawful classification or requiring as a condition of employment that the applicant submit an ideological statement.
- (3) Promoting the teaching or philosophy that a particular race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or any subcategory thereof is inherently superior to another.
- (4) Discriminating against or adversely treating any individual because of the individual's race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or any subcategory thereof.
- Promoting the teaching or philosophy that the moral character of an individual is determined by his or her race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or subcategory thereof.
- (6) Promoting the teaching or philosophy that, by virtue of an individual's race, color, ethnicity, national origin, or sex, or any subcategory thereof, the individual is inherently racist, oppressive, or sexist whether consciously or subconsciously.
- (7) Promoting the teaching or philosophy that, by virtue of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, or sex, a certain individual is inherently responsible for actions committed in the past by

other members of the same group.

- (8) Promoting the teaching or philosophy that fault, blame, or bias should be assigned to an individual on the basis that the individual is a member of a particular race, color, ethnicity, national origin, or sex.
- (9) Promoting the teaching or philosophy that an individual is to affirm, or assent to a sense of guilt, complicity, or a need to apologize on the basis of his or her race, color, ethnicity, national origin, or sex.
- (10) Any effort to compel the speech of a student in violation of a student's personal political ideas or affiliation in violation of present law.
- (11) Any use of self-generated fees for the purpose of promoting any unlawful discrimination.

<u>Proposed law</u> requires each college or university to create a code of conduct and disciplinary standards that are to be enforced when a student, faculty member, or other employee commits an act of unlawful discrimination pursuant to <u>proposed law</u>. Requires that each college or university is to provide an email address or other portal on the institution's website whereby a student, parent, faculty member, or employee may report a violation of <u>proposed law</u>.

<u>Proposed law</u> provides that each college or university annually report, beginning January 2, 2025, the total number of complaints of unlawful classifications and unlawful discrimination and, if applicable, the resolution of the complaints. The report is to be sent to the governor, the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives.

<u>Proposed law</u> provides a student who is harmed by a college or university due to violation of <u>proposed law</u> is to have a cause of action for damages or an injunction to prevent the violation, as well as actual damages, reasonable attorney fees and costs.

<u>Proposed law</u> provides that a faculty member or other employee may assert a cause of action pursuant to the antidiscrimination provisions of law in present law.

<u>Proposed law</u> provides that nothing in <u>proposed law</u> is to be used to prevent the lawful classification of protected classes at a college or university for the purpose of complying with state or federal antidiscrimination laws.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:3399.41-3399.46)