

# HOUSE BILL 81

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CF SB 29

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By: **Delegates Cane, Anderson, Benson, Branch, Braveboy, Burns, Conaway, Gaines, Glenn, Griffith, Harrison, Haynes, Howard, Jones, Kirk, Levi, Nathan-Pulliam, Oaks, Pena-Melnyk, Proctor, Rice, Robinson, Stukes, Tarrant, Taylor, Vaughn, and Walker**

Introduced and read first time: January 22, 2007

Assigned to: Appropriations

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Higher Education Commission – Review of Duplicative Academic**  
3 **Programs**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Higher Education Commission to make a  
5 certain determination concerning a program approved or implemented after a  
6 certain date under certain circumstances; providing that certain decisions of the  
7 Commission concerning duplication of academic programs are subject to judicial  
8 review in the circuit court in accordance with certain rules and certain  
9 provisions of the Maryland Administrative Procedure Act; and generally  
10 relating to the review of duplicative academic programs.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
12 Article – Education  
13 Section 11–206 and 11–206.1  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2006 Replacement Volume)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
17 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Education**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 11–206.

2 (a) This section does not apply to:

3 (1) New programs proposed to be implemented by public and  
4 nonpublic institutions of higher education using existing program resources in  
5 accordance with § 11–206.1 of this subtitle; and

6 (2) Programs offered by institutions of higher education that operate  
7 in the State without a certificate of approval in accordance with § 11–202(c)(2) or (3) of  
8 this subtitle.

9 (b) (1) Prior to the proposed date of implementation, the governing body  
10 of an institution of postsecondary education shall submit to the Commission each  
11 proposal for:

12 (i) A new program; or

13 (ii) A substantial modification of an existing program.

14 (2) The Commission shall review each such proposal and:

15 (i) With respect to each public institution of postsecondary  
16 education, either approve or disapprove the proposal;

17 (ii) With respect to each nonpublic institution of higher  
18 education, either recommend that the proposal be implemented or that the proposal  
19 not be implemented; and

20 (iii) With respect to a private career school, either approve or  
21 disapprove the proposal.

22 (3) If the Commission fails to act within 60 days of the date of  
23 submission of the completed proposal, the proposal shall be deemed approved.

24 (4) Except as provided in paragraph (3) of this subsection, a public  
25 institution of postsecondary education and private career school may not implement a  
26 proposal without the prior approval of the Commission.

27 (5) Except as provided in paragraph (3) of this subsection, and subject  
28 to the provisions of § 17–105 of this article, a nonpublic institution of higher education  
29 may implement a proposal that has not received a positive recommendation by the  
30 Commission.

1           (6) (i) If the Commission disapproves a proposal, the Commission  
2 shall provide to the governing body that submits the proposal a written explanation of  
3 the reasons for the disapproval.

4           (ii) After revising a proposal to address the Commission's  
5 reasons for disapproval, the governing body may submit the revised proposal to the  
6 Commission for approval.

7           (c) (1) Prior to discontinuation, each institution of postsecondary  
8 education that proposes to discontinue an existing program shall provide written  
9 notification to the Commission specifying:

10                   (i) The name of the program; and

11                   (ii) The expected date of discontinuation.

12           (2) By rule or regulation, the Commission may require the payment by  
13 a private career school of a refund to any student or enrollee who, because of the  
14 discontinuation of an ongoing program, is unable to complete such program.

15           (d) The Commission shall review and make recommendations on programs in  
16 nonpublic institutions of higher education that receive State funds.

17           (e) (1) In this subsection, "governing board" includes the board of trustees  
18 of a community college.

19           (2) The Commission shall adopt regulations establishing standards for  
20 determining whether 2 or more programs are unreasonably duplicative.

21           (3) The Commission may review existing programs at public  
22 institutions of postsecondary education if the Commission has reason to believe that  
23 academic programs are unreasonably duplicative or inconsistent with an institution's  
24 adopted mission.

25           (4) [The] **EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (5) OF THIS**  
26 **SUBSECTION, THE** Commission may make a determination that an unreasonable  
27 duplication of programs exists on its own initiative or after receipt of a request for  
28 **SUCH A** determination from any directly affected public institution of postsecondary  
29 education.

1           **(5) FOR A PROGRAM THAT HAS BEEN APPROVED OR**  
2 **IMPLEMENTED AFTER JULY 1, 2005, THE COMMISSION SHALL MAKE A**  
3 **DETERMINATION WHETHER A DUPLICATION OF PROGRAMS EXISTS AFTER**  
4 **RECEIPT OF A REQUEST FOR SUCH A DETERMINATION FROM ANY AFFECTED**  
5 **PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.**  
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7           **[(5)] (6)** (i) If the Commission makes a determination under  
8 paragraph (4) of this subsection the Commission may:

9                           1. Make recommendations to a governing board on the  
10 continuation or modification of the programs;

11                           2. Require any affected governing board to submit a plan  
12 to resolve the duplication; and

13                           3. Negotiate, as necessary, with any affected governing  
14 board until the unreasonable duplication is eliminated.

15                           (ii) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (i) of this  
16 paragraph, if the Commission determines that 2 or more existing programs offered by  
17 institutions under the governance of different governing boards are unreasonably  
18 duplicative, the governing boards of the institutions of postsecondary education at  
19 which the programs are offered shall have 180 days from the date of the Commission's  
20 determination to formulate and present to the Commission a joint plan to eliminate  
21 the duplication.

22                           (iii) If in the Commission's judgment the plan satisfactorily  
23 eliminates the duplication, the governing board of the affected institutions shall be so  
24 notified and shall take appropriate steps to implement the plan.

25                           (iv) If in the Commission's judgment the plan does not  
26 satisfactorily eliminate the duplication, or if no plan is jointly submitted within the  
27 time period specified in paragraph **[(6)] (8)** of this subsection, the governing board of  
28 the affected institutions shall be so notified. The Commission may then seek to  
29 eliminate the duplication by revoking the authority of a public institution of  
30 postsecondary education to offer the unreasonably duplicative program.

31           **(7) A DECISION OF THE COMMISSION UNDER THIS SUBSECTION,**  
32 **BASED ON A REQUEST UNDER SUBSECTION (E)(5) OF THIS SECTION, IS SUBJECT**  
33 **TO JUDICIAL REVIEW IN THE CIRCUIT COURT IN ACCORDANCE WITH MARYLAND**  
34 **RULE 7-201 ET SEQ. AND § 10-222 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.**

1            ~~[(6)]~~ **(8)**     (i)     Prior to imposing a sanction under paragraph ~~[(5)]~~  
2 **(6)** of this subsection, the Commission shall give notice of the proposed sanction to the  
3 governing board of each affected institution.

4                            (ii)     1.     Within 20 days of receipt of the notice, any affected  
5 institution may request an opportunity to meet with the Commission and present  
6 objections.

7                            2.     If timely requested, the Commission shall provide  
8 such opportunity prior to the Commission's decision to impose a sanction.

9                            (iii)    The Commission's decision shall be final and is not subject  
10 to further administrative appeal or judicial review.

11 11-206.1.

12            (a)     In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

13                            (1)     "Public institution of higher education" means:

14                            (i)     A public senior higher education institution; and

15                            (ii)    A community college.

16                            (2)     "Nonpublic institution of higher education" means a regionally  
17 accredited institution of higher education eligible for aid under § 17-103 of this article.

18            (b)     (1)     A president of a public institution of higher education may propose  
19 to establish a new program or abolish an existing program if the action:

20                            (i)     Is consistent with the institution's adopted mission  
21 statement under Subtitle 3 of this title; and

22                            (ii)    Can be implemented within the existing program resources  
23 of the institution.

24                            (2)     A president of a nonpublic institution of higher education may  
25 propose to establish a new program if the action:

26                            (i)     Is consistent with the mission statement published in the  
27 official catalog of the nonpublic institution; and

1 (ii) Can be implemented within the existing resources of the  
2 institution.

3 (3) The president of a public institution of higher education shall  
4 report any programs that are proposed to be established or abolished in accordance  
5 with paragraph (1) of this subsection to:

6 (i) The institution's governing board; and

7 (ii) The Maryland Higher Education Commission.

8 (4) The president of a nonpublic institution of higher education shall  
9 report any programs that are proposed to be established in accordance with paragraph  
10 (2) of this subsection to the Commission.

11 (5) Upon receipt of a proposed new program, the Commission shall  
12 notify all other institutions of higher education in the State.

13 (c) The governing board of a public institution of higher education shall:

14 (1) Review the actions taken under subsection (b) of this section;

15 (2) Ensure that any new program proposed to be established by a  
16 president:

17 (i) Is consistent with the institution's approved mission  
18 statement under Subtitle 3 of this title;

19 (ii) Meets a regional or statewide need consistent with the  
20 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education;

21 (iii) Meets criteria for the quality of new programs, developed in  
22 consultation with the Commission; and

23 (iv) Can be implemented within the existing program resources  
24 of the institution, verified by a process established in consultation with the  
25 Commission.

26 (d) The Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland shall approve  
27 the proposed new program within 60 days if the program meets the criteria in  
28 subsection (c)(2) of this section, subject to the provisions of subsections (e) and (f) of  
29 this section.

1           (e)     Within 30 days of receipt of a notice of an institution's intent to establish  
2 a new program in accordance with subsection (b) of this section, the Commission may  
3 file, or the institutions of higher education in the State may file with the Commission,  
4 an objection to implementation of a proposed program provided the objection is based  
5 on:

6           (1)     Inconsistency of the proposed program with the institution's  
7 approved mission for a public institution of higher education and the mission  
8 statement published in the official catalog of a nonpublic institution of higher  
9 education;

10           (2)    Not meeting a regional or statewide need consistent with the  
11 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education;

12           (3)     Unreasonable program duplication which would cause  
13 demonstrable harm to another institution; or

14           (4)     Violation of the State's equal educational opportunity obligations  
15 under State and federal law.

16           (f)     (1)    If an objection is filed under subsection (e) of this section by the  
17 Commission or an institution within 30 days of receipt of a notice of an institution's  
18 intent to establish a new program, the Commission shall immediately notify the  
19 institution's governing board and president.

20           (2)     The Commission shall determine if an institution's objection is  
21 justified based on the criteria in subsection (e) of this section.

22           (3)     An objection shall be accompanied by detailed information  
23 supporting the reasons for the objection.

24           (4)     If the Commission determines that an objection is justified, the  
25 Commission shall negotiate with the institution's governing board and president to  
26 modify the proposed program in order to resolve the objection.

27           (5)     If the objection cannot be resolved within 30 days of receipt of an  
28 objection, the Commission shall make a final determination on approval of the new  
29 program for a public institution of higher education or a final recommendation on  
30 implementation for a nonpublic institution of higher education.

31           **(6)     A DECISION OF THE COMMISSION UNDER THIS SUBSECTION,**  
32 **AFTER AN OBJECTION UNDER SUBSECTION (E)(3) OF THIS SECTION, IS SUBJECT**

1 **TO JUDICIAL REVIEW IN THE CIRCUIT COURT IN ACCORDANCE WITH MARYLAND**  
2 **RULE 7-201 ET SEQ. AND § 10-222 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.**

3 (g) (1) The Commission shall:

4 (i) Identify programs established under subsection (b) of this  
5 section that are inconsistent with the State Plan for Higher Education; and

6 (ii) Identify low productivity programs at public institutions of  
7 higher education.

8 (2) If the Commission identifies any programs that meet the criteria  
9 set forth in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Commission shall notify the president  
10 of the institution.

11 (3) If the Commission notifies a president of an institution under  
12 paragraph (2) of this subsection, within 60 days the president of the institution shall  
13 provide to the Commission in writing:

14 (i) An action plan to abolish or modify the program; or

15 (ii) Justification for the continuation of the program.

16 (h) The Commission and the governing boards of the public institutions of  
17 higher education shall jointly develop a definition and accepted criteria for  
18 determining low productivity programs.

19 (i) The Commission shall:

20 (1) Monitor the program development and review process established  
21 under this section;

22 (2) Report annually to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246  
23 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly on the nature and extent of  
24 any duplication or proliferation of programs; and

25 (3) Make available a copy of the report under paragraph (2) of this  
26 subsection to the public institutions of higher education and the nonpublic institutions  
27 of higher education.

28 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
29 July 1, 2007.