

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

EAB 1/8/2010

LRB Number	09-3076/6	Introduction Number	AB-0624	Estimate Type	Original
Description The use of the terms college, university, state, and Wisconsin in the name of a school; the issuing, manufacture, or use of a false academic credential; the false use of a legitimate academic credential; making an appropriation; and providing a penalty					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill would create "diploma mill" legislation that would make it a crime to for a person to manufacture or issue a false academic credential, or for a person who knowingly uses or claims to have a false academic credential. The bill would also protect the use of the terms "college," "university," "state" and "Wisconsin" in the name of a (postsecondary) school and directs the Educational Approval Board (EAB) to maintain a list of schools authorized to use these terms on its website.

Only those postsecondary institutions granted accreditation from a either an accreditor recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education, have the foreign equivalent of that accreditation as determined by the EAB, or have accreditation that is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation would be permitted to use the terms "college" or "university." For a school that is exempt from EAB oversight, the terms "state" and "Wisconsin" could only be used if it did not mislead the public into believing that the school is affiliated with the UW or technical college systems.

The EAB currently maintains a list of approved schools on its website and provides information about those schools that are exempt from approval. It is assumed that the requirement directing the EAB to maintain a list of the schools authorized to use the protected terms on its website pertains those schools the EAB approves, and not all schools that are exempt from approval, which would include over 6000 postsecondary institutions in the United States. Under this assumption, the provision would have no fiscal impact on the EAB.

The bill also permits the EAB to charge a fee for evaluating an educational institution to determine if it meets standards of academic quality comparable to those of accredited institutions. Because any postsecondary institution seeking to serve Wisconsin residents currently needs to be approved by the EAB, unless specifically exempt, and must pay a fee in accordance with the fee structure prescribed in administration rule (see s.EAB 4.10), the EAB assumes little, if any, additional revenue will be generated as a result of the bill.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications