



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

Raised Bill No. 428

LCO No. 2639



Referred to Committee on HIGHER EDUCATION AND
EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT

Introduced by:
(HED)

***AN ACT CONCERNING RESEARCH FUNDING AT INSTITUTIONS OF
HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) There is established an
2 Academic Research Funding Commission, which shall be part of the
3 Executive Department.

4 (b) The commission shall consist of the following members:

5 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
6 who is a member of the faculty at The University of Connecticut;

7 (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who is
8 a member of the faculty at a state university within the Connecticut State
9 University System;

10 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
11 Representatives, who is a member of the faculty at a nonprofit,
12 independent institution of higher education in the state;

13 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who is a
14 member of the faculty at The University of Connecticut;

15 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
16 Representatives, who is a member of the faculty at a nonprofit,
17 independent institution of higher education in the state;

18 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who is a
19 member of the faculty at a state university within the Connecticut State
20 University System;

21 (7) Two persons appointed by the Governor, who represent large
22 industry sectors in the state and have experience with research and
23 technology development;

24 (8) One appointed by the House chairperson of the joint standing
25 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
26 relating to higher education and employment advancement, who is a
27 member of the faculty at The University of Connecticut School of
28 Medicine or School of Dental Medicine;

29 (9) One person appointed by the Senate chairperson of the joint
30 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
31 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement,
32 who is a member of the faculty at The University of Connecticut School
33 of Medicine or School of Dental Medicine;

34 (10) One person appointed by the House ranking member of the joint
35 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
36 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement,
37 who is a member of the faculty at a nonprofit, independent institution
38 of higher education in the state;

39 (11) One person appointed by the Senate ranking member of the joint
40 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
41 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement,

42 who is a member of the faculty at a nonprofit, independent institution
43 of higher education in the state;

44 (12) The vice president of research at The University of Connecticut;
45 and

46 (13) The vice president of research at Yale University.

47 (c) All initial appointments to the commission pursuant to
48 subdivisions (1) to (11), inclusive, of subsection (b) of this section shall
49 be made not later than September 1, 2026, and shall terminate on June
50 30, 2028, and June 30, 2029, in accordance with the provisions of
51 subsection (f) of this section, regardless of when the initial appointment
52 was made. Any member of the commission may serve more than one
53 term.

54 (d) The vice presidents of research at The University of Connecticut
55 and Yale University shall serve as the cochairpersons of the commission.
56 Such cochairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the commission,
57 which shall be held not later than September 1, 2026.

58 (e) The administrative staff of the Office of Higher Education shall
59 serve as administrative staff of the commission.

60 (f) Appointed members of the commission shall serve for two-year
61 terms which shall commence on the date of appointment, except as
62 provided in subsection (c) of this section, and members first appointed
63 shall have the following terms: (1) Members appointed by the Governor
64 and members appointed by the majority leader of the House of
65 Representatives, the minority leader of the House of Representatives
66 shall initially serve a term of two years and the chairpersons of the joint
67 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
68 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement,
69 and (2) members appointed by the speaker of the House of
70 Representatives, the president pro tempore of the Senate, the majority
71 leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate shall initially serve

72 a term of three years and the ranking members of the joint standing
73 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
74 relating to higher education and employment advancement. Members
75 shall continue to serve until their successors are appointed.

76 (g) Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority. Any
77 vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the
78 balance of the unexpired term.

79 (h) A majority of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the
80 transaction of any business.

81 (i) The members of the commission shall serve without
82 compensation, but shall, within the limits of available funds, be
83 reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of
84 their duties.

85 (j) The commission shall have the following powers and duties: (1)
86 Award research funding grants to research faculty at institutions of
87 higher education in the state, prioritizing grants to fund research
88 conducted on topics and subjects that have been reduced, restricted or
89 eliminated as a result of changes in the funding of grants from the
90 National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation and other
91 federal agencies; (2) obtain from any executive department, board,
92 commission or other agency of the state such assistance and data as
93 necessary and available to carry out the purposes of this section; (3)
94 accept any gift, donation or bequest for the purpose of performing the
95 duties described in this section; (4) establish bylaws to govern its
96 procedures; and (5) perform such other acts as may be necessary and
97 appropriate to carry out the duties described in this section.

98 (k) The commission shall meet as often as deemed necessary by the
99 cochairpersons of the commission. Any appointed member who fails to
100 attend three consecutive meetings or who fails to attend fifty per cent of
101 all meetings held during any calendar year shall be deemed to have
102 resigned from the commission.

103 (l) Not later than January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, the
104 commission shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of
105 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Governor, the Commissioner
106 of Higher Education and the joint standing committee of the General
107 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education
108 and employment advancement on the research funding grants awarded
109 by the commission during the prior fiscal year, which shall include, but
110 need not be limited to, (1) the number and amount of research funding
111 grants awarded, (2) the types of research for which the commission
112 awarded research funding grants, (3) the number of applications the
113 commission received from research faculty for research funding grants,
114 and (4) recommendations for policy changes and amendments to the
115 general statutes necessary to expand the impact of research funding
116 grants on the scope of academic research conducted in the state and on
117 the state economy.

118 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2026*) The sum of fifty million dollars is
119 appropriated to the Academic Research Funding Commission from the
120 General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, to distribute
121 research fund grants to research faculty at institutions of higher
122 education in the state pursuant to section 1 of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To establish the Academic Research Funding Commission to distribute research funds to faculty at institutions of higher education in the state.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]