

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.
Act 473 of the Regular Session

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

As Engrossed: H3/5/25 H3/12/25

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1561

By: Representatives Painter, Achor, Andrews, Barker, Beaty Jr., Beck, Bentley, S. Berry, Breaux, Brooks, K. Brown, M. Brown, N. Burkes, R. Burkes, Joey Carr, John Carr, Cavanaugh, Childress, C. Cooper, Cozart, Crawford, Eaton, Evans, Furman, Gazaway, Gramlich, Hall, Hawk, Hollowell, L. Johnson, Long, Lundstrum, Lynch, Maddox, McAlindon, McClure, M. McElroy, McGrew, B. McKenzie, McNair, Milligan, J. Moore, Nazarenko, Pearce, Perry, Pilkington, Puryear, Ray, R. Scott Richardson, Richmond, Rose, Rye, Schulz, M. Shepherd, Torres, Tosh, Underwood, Unger, Vaught, Walker, Wing, Wooten
By: Senator Hill

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION;
TO ESTABLISH THE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROTECTION
ACT OF 2025; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO ESTABLISH THE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
PROTECTION ACT OF 2025.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 60, is amended to add an additional subchapter to read as follows:

Subchapter 16 - Research and Education Protection Act of 2025.

6-60-1601. Title.

This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Research and Education Protection Act of 2025".

6-60-1602. Purpose.

The purpose of this subchapter is to protect Arkansas's research and educational systems from the malign influence of foreign adversaries.



6-60-1603. Definitions.As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Affiliate organization" means an entity under the control of or established for the benefit of an organization required to report under this subchapter, including without limitation a direct-support organization;

(2) "Agreement" means a written or spoken statement of mutual interest in a cultural exchange agreement or an academic or a research collaboration with a foreign adversary or an affiliate organization of a foreign adversary;

(3) "Contract" means an agreement for the acquisition by purchase, lease, or barter of property or services for the direct benefit or use of either of the parties;

(4) "Cultural exchange agreement" means an agreement between a foreign adversary and an institution of higher education that aims to promote cultural and intellectual relations;

(5) "Direct-support organization" means an organization that is organized and operated to receive, hold, invest, and administer property and to make expenditures to or for the benefit of a:

(A) State-supported institution of higher education; or

(B) Research and development park or research and development authority affiliated with a state-supported institution of higher education;

(6) "Endeavor" means to attempt or to try;

(7) "Foreign adversary" means:

(A) The People's Republic of China;

(B) The Russian Federation;

(C) The Islamic Republic of Iran;

(D) The Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

(E) The Republic of Cuba;

(F) The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

(G) The Syrian Arab Republic;

(H) A foreign terrorist organization designated by the United States Secretary of State in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA), including without limitation an agent of or other entity under significant control of the foreign

adversary; or

(I) An entity designated by the United States Government;

(8) "Foreign agent" means an officer, employee, proxy, servant, delegate, or representative of a foreign government;

(9)(A) "Foreign government" means the government of a country, nation, or group of nations or a province or other political subdivision of a country or nation other than the United States.

(B) "Foreign government" includes without limitation an agent of the government of a country, nation, or group of nations or a province or other political subdivision of a country or nation other than the United States;

(10) "Foreign instrumentality" means an agency, bureau, ministry, component, institution, association, or any legal, commercial, or business organization, corporation, firm, or entity that is substantially owned, controlled, sponsored, commanded, managed, or dominated by a foreign government;

(11)(A) "Gift" means:

(i) A gift;

(ii) An endowment;

(iii) An award;

(iv) A donation of money or property of any kind; or

(v) Any combination of subdivisions (11)(A)(i)–(iv) of this section.

(B) "Gift" includes without limitation a conditional or unconditional pledge of the gift, endowment, award, or donation.

(C) For purposes of subdivision (11)(B) of this section, "pledge" means a promise, an agreement, or an expressed intention to give a gift;

(12) "Institution of higher education" means:

(A) A state-supported institution of higher education or an independent nonprofit college or university that is located in and chartered by the state and grants baccalaureate or higher degrees;

(B) Any other institution of higher education that has a physical presence in the state and is required to report foreign gifts or contracts pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §1011f; or

(C) An affiliate organization of an institution of higher

education;

(13) "Obtain or use" means any manner of:

(A) Taking or exercising control over property;

(B) Making any unauthorized use, disposition, or transfer of property;

(C) Obtaining property by fraud, willful misrepresentation of a future act, or false promise; or

(D) Conduct previously known as:

(i) Stealing;

(ii) Larceny;

(iii) Purloining;

(iv) Abstracting;

(v) Embezzlement;

(vi) Misapplication;

(vii) Misappropriation;

(viii) Conversion;

(ix) Obtaining money or property by false pretenses, fraud, or deception; or

(x) Other conduct similar in nature;

(14) "Partnership" means a:

(A) Faculty or student exchange program;

(B) Study abroad program;

(C) Matriculation program;

(D) Recruiting program; or

(E) Dual degree program;

(15) "Person" means:

(A) Any natural person;

(B) A corporation;

(C) A business trust;

(D) An estate;

(E) A trust;

(F) A partnership;

(G) An association;

(H) A joint venture;

(I) A government;

(J) A governmental subdivision or agency; or

(K) Any other legal or commercial entity;

(16) "Research" means a scientific investigation or development that involves technologies, designs, or technical data considered sensitive enough to potentially impact national security, and therefore requires strict controls on the export or transfer to foreign entities, as outlined by the International Traffic in Arms Regulations and the Export Administration regulations of the United States Government; and

(17) "Trade secret" means information, including a formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique, or process, that:

(i) Derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and

(ii) Is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

6-60-1604. Disclosure requirements for past gifts.

(a)(1) An institution of higher education that has received directly or indirectly a gift with a value equal to or greater than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) from a foreign adversary after December 31, 2019, shall disclose the gift.

(2) The disclosure of a gift required under subdivision (a)(1) of this section shall be made to the governing board of the institution of higher education within sixty (60) days of the effective date of this subchapter.

(b) Unless otherwise prohibited or deemed confidential under state or federal law, the disclosure required under subdivision (a)(1) of this section shall include without limitation the:

(1) Date of the gift;

(2) Amount of the gift;

(3) Purpose of the gift;

(4) Identification of the person for whom the gift is explicitly intended to benefit;

(5) Applicable conditions, requirements, restrictions, or terms made part of the gift;

(6) Name and country of residence or domicile of the foreign adversary;

(7) Name and mailing address of the disclosing entity; and

(8) Date of termination of the gift, as applicable.

(c) An institution of higher education shall maintain a public website to disclose information on past gifts from a foreign adversary.

(d) For purposes of this section, a gift received from a foreign adversary through an intermediary or affiliate organization, if known, is:

(1) An indirect gift to the institution of higher education; and

(2) Subject to the disclosure process described in this section.

(e) Upon a request of the Governor, the President of the Senate, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the governing board of an institution of higher education shall inspect or audit a past gift or gift agreement.

6-60-1605. Approval requirements for future gifts.

(a) An institution of higher education that has been offered directly or indirectly a gift with a value equal to or greater than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) from a foreign adversary after the effective date of this subchapter shall disclose the proposed gift to the governing board of the institution of higher education.

(b) Unless otherwise prohibited or deemed confidential under state or federal law, the disclosure required under subsection (a) of this section shall include without limitation the:

(1) Date of the gift;

(2) Amount of the gift;

(3) Purpose of the gift;

(4) Identification of the person for whom the gift is explicitly intended to benefit;

(5) Applicable conditions, requirements, restrictions, or terms made part of the gift;

(6) Name and country of residence or domicile of the foreign adversary;

(7) Name and mailing address of the disclosing entity; and

(8) Date of termination of the gift, as applicable.

(c)(1) Within thirty (30) days of receiving the disclosure of the

proposed gift under subsection (a) of this section, the governing board of an institution of higher education shall issue a final decision to the institution of higher education on whether and under what conditions the institution of higher education may accept the gift.

(2) The governing board of the institution of higher education shall reject a gift from a foreign adversary unless there is an overwhelming state or national interest in accepting the gift.

(d)(1) The governing board of an institution of higher education shall develop:

(A) A disclosure form;

(B) Rules; and

(C) Procedures for deciding whether to allow an institution of higher education to accept a gift from a foreign adversary.

(2) A gift from a foreign adversary shall only be accepted if the gift addresses an overwhelming state or national interest beyond simply acquiring additional funds.

(e) An institution of higher education shall maintain a public website to disclose information on accepted gifts from foreign adversaries.

(f) For purposes of this section, a gift received from a foreign adversary through an intermediary shall be considered an indirect gift with the institution of higher education and is subject to the approval process described in this section.

(g) Upon a request of the Governor, the President of the Senate, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the governing board of an institution of higher education shall inspect or audit a gift or gift agreement.

6-60-1606. Disclosure requirements for past contracts.

(a) An institution of higher education that has entered directly or indirectly into a contract with a value equal to or greater than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) with a foreign adversary after December 31, 2019, shall disclose the contract to the governing board of the institution of higher education within sixty (60) days following the effective date of this subchapter.

(b) Unless otherwise prohibited or deemed confidential under state or federal law, the disclosure required under subsection (a) of this section

shall include without limitation:

- (1) The date of the contract;
- (2) The amount of the contract;
- (3) The purpose of the contract;
- (4) The identification of the person for whom the contract is explicitly intended to benefit;
- (5) The applicable conditions, requirements, restrictions, or terms made part of the contract;
- (6) A copy of the contract;
- (7) The name and country of residence or domicile of the foreign adversary;
- (8) The name and mailing address of the disclosing entity; and
- (9) The date of termination of the contract, as applicable.

(c) For purposes of this section, a contract entered with a foreign adversary through an intermediary or affiliate organization shall be considered an indirect contract to the institution of higher education and is subject to the disclosure process described in this section.

(d) An institution of higher education shall maintain a public website to disclose information on contracts with a foreign adversary.

(e) Upon the request of the Governor, the President of the Senate, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the governing board of an institution of higher education shall inspect or audit a past contract.

6-60-1607. Approval requirements for future contracts.

(a) An institution of higher education that has been offered or has proposed directly or indirectly a contract with a value equal to or greater than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) from or with a foreign adversary after the effective date of this subchapter shall disclose the proposed contract to the governing board of the institution of higher education before entering into the contract.

(b) Unless otherwise prohibited or deemed confidential under state or federal law, the disclosure required under subsection (a) of this section shall include without limitation:

- (1) The date of the contract;
- (2) The amount of the contract;
- (3) The purpose of the contract;

(4) The identification of the person for whom the contract is explicitly intended to benefit;

(5) The applicable conditions, requirements, restrictions, or terms made part of the contract;

(6) A copy of the contract;

(7) The name and country of residence or domicile of the foreign adversary;

(8) The name and mailing address of the disclosing entity; and

(9) The date of termination of the contract as applicable.

(c)(1) Within thirty (30) days of receiving the disclosure of the proposed contract under subsection (a) of this section, the governing board of an institution of higher education shall issue a final decision to the institution of higher education on whether and under what conditions the institution of higher education may enter into the contract.

(2) The governing board of the institution of higher education shall reject a contract with a foreign adversary unless there is an overwhelming state or national interest in accepting or entering the contract.

(d)(1) The governing board of an institution of higher education shall develop disclosure forms, rules, and procedures for deciding upon whether to allow institutions of higher education to enter into contracts from foreign adversaries.

(2) A contract shall only be entered into if the contract addresses an overwhelming state or national interest.

(e) An institution of higher education shall maintain a public website disclosing a contract from a foreign adversary described in this section, along with the final decision on whether to allow the relevant institution of higher education to enter into the contract.

(f) For purposes of this section, a contract proposed from a foreign adversary through an intermediary or affiliate organization shall be considered an indirect contract with the institution of higher education and is subject to the approval process described in this section.

(g) An institution of higher education shall maintain a public website to disclose information on contracts from foreign adversaries.

(h) Upon a request of the Governor, the President of the Senate, or

the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the governing board of an institution of higher education shall inspect or audit a contract agreement.

6-60-1608. Enforcement related to foreign gifts – Penalties – Rewards.

(a) Upon receiving a referral from a compliance officer of an institution of higher education or a sworn complaint based upon substantive information and reasonable belief as defined in Arkansas law, the Department of Inspector General shall investigate an allegation of a violation of §§ 6-60-1605 – 6-60-1607.

(b)(1) The department or compliance officer authorized by an institution of higher education may request records relevant to any reasonable suspicion of a violation of this subchapter.

(2) An entity shall provide the requested records under subdivision (b)(1) of this section within ten (10) days after the request or a later date agreed to by the department.

(c) An institution of higher education that knowingly fails to make a disclosure required under this subchapter or knowingly fails to provide records requested under subsection (b)(1) of this section is subject to, upon a final administration finding, a civil fine of:

(1) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for a first violation; or

(2) Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for a subsequent violation.

(d) A whistleblower who reports an undisclosed foreign gift or contract from a foreign adversary to the appropriate inspector general may also report the undisclosed gift or contract to the Attorney General and retain whistleblower protection under the Arkansas Whistle-Blower Act, § 21-1-601 et seq.

(e) Information reported under subsection (b) of this section is not confidential or exempt from examination or disclosure, except as otherwise provided by law.

(f) The governing board an institution of higher education and the department may adopt rules to implement this section.

6-60-1609. Prohibition on certain cultural exchange agreements.

(a) An institution of higher education shall not participate in a

cultural exchange agreement with a foreign adversary or an entity controlled by a foreign adversary unless the institution of higher education:

(1) Addresses an overwhelmingly underaddressed state or national need; and

(2) Avoids:

(A) Constraining the freedom of contract of the public entity;

(B) Allowing the curricula or values of a program in the state to be directed, controlled, or influenced by the foreign adversary; or

(C) Promoting an agenda detrimental to the safety or security of the state, residents of the state, or the United States.

(b)(1) Before the execution of a cultural exchange agreement with a foreign adversary, the substance of the cultural exchange agreement shall be shared with the Department of the Inspector General.

(2) If the department concludes that the cultural exchange agreement promotes an agenda detrimental to the safety or security of the state, the United States, or residents of the state, the institution of higher education shall not enter into the cultural exchange agreement.

(c)(1) By December 1, 2026, and each December 1 thereafter, the governing board of an institution of higher education and the department shall submit a report to the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives relating to partnerships and agreements of institutions of higher education made with educational institutions or other institutions based in foreign adversaries.

(2) At a minimum, the report required by subdivision (c)(1) of this section shall include without limitation the following information for the previous fiscal year:

(A) Data reflecting any program, agreement, partnership, or contract between an institution of higher education and any college, university, or entity that is based in or controlled by a foreign adversary;

(B) Data reflecting any office, campus, or physical location used or maintained by an institution of higher education in a

foreign adversary; and

(C) The date on which any such program, agreement, partnership, or contract reported pursuant to subdivision (c)(2)(A) is expected to terminate.

(d) Each institution of higher education shall submit the information required in subsection (c) of this section to the governing board of the institution of higher education and the department by July 1, 2026, and on each July 1 thereafter.

(e)(1) A registered student organization or scholar association hosted by an institution of higher education shall not:

(A) Accept a gift from a foreign adversary;

(B) Enter into any contract or agreement with a foreign adversary; or

(C) Be directed or controlled by the government of a foreign adversary.

(2) A violation of subdivision (e)(1) of this section shall result in the institution of higher education ending any affiliation with the registered student organization.

(3) For purposes of this subsection, member dues or fees shall not be considered a gift from or a contract or agreement with a foreign adversary.

(f) The governing board of an institution of higher education and the department shall adopt rules to administer this section.

6-60-1610. Screening requirements for higher education hiring and research.

(a) An institution of higher education or affiliate of an institution of higher education that has federal research expenditures of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) or more shall screen applicants who are citizens of a foreign adversary and are not permanent residents of the United States prior to any final offer of employment or letter of invitation as follows:

(1) Employment in:

(A) Research positions; and

(B) Graduate and undergraduate students applying for research positions; or

(2) A position of a visiting researcher who is a citizen of a

foreign adversary and is not a permanent resident of the United States.

(b)(1) The screening required by subsection (a) of this section is required before offering the applicant a position of employment or of a visiting researcher.

(2) At the discretion of the institution of higher education, other applicants for a position may be screened.

(c) An applicant described in subsection (a) of this section shall submit:

(1) A complete resume or curriculum vitae, including without limitation every institution of higher education attended;

(2) All previous employment since the applicant's eighteenth birthday;

(3) A list of all published material for which the applicant received credit as an author, a researcher, or otherwise to which the applicant contributed significant research, writing, or editorial support;

(4) A list of the applicant's current and pending research funding from any source, including the name of the funder, amount, applicant's role on the project, and brief description of the research;

(5) A full disclosure of non-university professional activities, including any affiliation with an institution or program in a foreign adversary;

(6) Other activities that bear on the qualifications appropriate for the position, including without limitation private or public sector experience, military service, or other appropriate experience; and

(7) A list of all patents held and the country of record.

(d) For an applicant who has been continually employed or enrolled in an institution of higher education in the United States for twenty (20) years or more, the resume may include employment history before the most recent twenty (20) years.

(e)(1) The president or chief administrative officer of the institution of higher education or affiliate of the institution of higher education shall designate a research compliance office to review all materials required in subsection (c) of this section.

(2) The president or chief administrator of the institution of higher education shall take reasonable steps to verify information that includes without limitation:

(A) Searching public listings of persons subject to sanctions or restrictions under federal law;

(B) Submitting the applicant's name and other identifying information to any federal agency reasonably willing to scrutinize the applicant for national security or counterespionage purposes; and

(C) Any other steps deemed appropriate to the research compliance office under subdivision (e)(1) of this section.

(3) The institution of higher education or affiliate of the institution of higher education may also create a process to approve applicants for hire based on a risk-based determination considering the:

(A) Nature of the research; and

(B) Background and ongoing affiliations of the applicant.

(f)(1) The requirements of this section shall be completed before offering any position to an individual described in subsection (a) in any research position and before granting the individual any access to research data or activities or other sensitive data.

(2) An applicant screened under this section shall not be employed in any research position if he or she fails to disclose a substantial educational, employment, or research activity, publication, or presentation at the time of submitting an application, unless the academic department head or his or her designee certifies in writing the substance of the nondisclosure and the reasons for disregarding the failure to disclose.

6-60-1611. Foreign adversary travel requirements.

(a)(1) By January 1, 2026, each institution of higher education or affiliate organization of the institution of higher education that has federal research expenditures of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) or more shall establish a foreign adversary travel approval and monitoring program.

(2) The foreign adversary travel approval and monitoring program required under subdivision (a)(1) of this section shall require preapproval and screening by a research compliance office designated by the president or chief administrative officer of the institution of higher education or affiliate organization of the institution of higher education for any employment-related foreign travel to a foreign adversary country

and employment-related foreign adversary activities engaged in by all faculty, researchers, and research department staff.

(3) The requirement under subdivision (a)(2) of this section shall be in addition to any other travel approval process applicable to the state-supported institution of higher education or affiliate organization.

(b) Preapproval for travel to a foreign adversary country by the research compliance office of the institution of higher education shall be based on:

(1) The applicant's review and acknowledgement of guidance published by the employing state-supported institution of higher education or affiliate organization of the institution of higher education that relates to:

(A) Foreign adversaries;

(B) Countries under sanction; or

(C) Other restrictions or designations imposed by the state or the United States Government including without limitation:

(i) Any federal licensing requirements;

(ii) Customs rules;

(iii) Export controls;

(iv) Restrictions on taking university or entity property, including intellectual property, abroad;

(v) Restrictions on presentations, teaching, and interactions with foreign adversary colleagues; and

(vi) Other subjects important to the research and academic integrity of the institution of higher education; and

(2) The binding commitment of the individual traveler not to violate the institution of higher education or affiliate organization of the institution of higher education's limitations on foreign adversary travel and activities abroad and to obey all applicable federal laws.

(c)(1) The institution of higher education or affiliate organization of the institution of higher education shall maintain records of:

(A) All foreign adversary travel requests and approvals;

(B) Expenses reimbursed by the institution of higher education or affiliate organization of the institution of higher education during such foreign adversary travel including for travel, food, and

lodging; and

(C) Payments and honoraria received during the foreign adversary travel and activities, including for travel, food, and lodging.

(2)(A) The institution of higher education shall also keep records of the purpose of the foreign adversary travel and any records related to the foreign activity review.

(B) The records shall be retained for at least three (3) years or any longer period of time required by any other applicable state or federal law.

(d) The institution of higher education shall provide an annual report to the governing board of the institution of higher education of foreign travel to a foreign adversary country listing the:

(1) Individual traveler;

(2) Foreign adversary location visited; and

(3) Foreign adversary institution visited.

6-60-1612. Prohibitions on research partnerships.

(a)(1) An institution of higher education shall only enter into a new partnership or renew an existing partnership with a foreign instrumentality if the institution of higher education maintains sufficient structural safeguards to protect the intellectual property of the institution of higher education.

(2) The governing board of an institution of higher education shall notify an institution of higher education if the board determines the partnership meets the safeguard requirements required by this subsection.

(3) The safeguard requirements under this subsection shall include without limitation the following:

(A) Compliance with all federal requirements, including the requirements of federal research sponsors and federal export control agencies, including regulations regarding international traffic in arms and export administration regulations, and economic and trade sanctions administered by the federal office of foreign assets control;

(B) Annual formal institution-level programs for faculty on conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment;

(C) An overwhelming state interest to enter into the

research or academic partnership;

(D) Lack of alternative institutions to engage with for a similar research or academic partnership; and

(E) A formalized foreign visitor process and uniform visiting scholar agreement.

(b) The board shall have full discretion to reject or terminate any research partnership between an institution of higher education and an academic or research institution located in a foreign adversary at any time and for any purpose.

6-60-1613. Prohibitions related to trade secrets.

A person who engages in willful misappropriation of a trade secret with the intent to benefit a foreign government, a foreign agent, or a foreign instrumentality shall be guilty, upon conviction, of a Class D felony.

6-60-1614. Penalties for violations related to intellectual property.

(a) A person who violates § 6-60-1613 commits theft of a trade secret and is guilty of a Class D felony.

(b) A person who traffics in, or endeavors to traffic in, a trade secret that he or she knows or should know was obtained or used without authorization commits trafficking in a trade secret and is guilty of a Class D felony.

(c) Whenever a person is charged with a violation of this act which was committed with the intent to benefit a foreign government, a foreign agent, or a foreign instrumentality, the offense for which the person is charged shall be reclassified as follows:

(1) In the case of theft of a trade secret, from a Class D felony to a Class C felony; and

(2) In the case of trafficking in trade secrets, from a Class D felony to a Class C felony.

6-60-1615. Duties related to foreign adversary software – Rules.

(a) The governing board of an institution of higher education shall conduct a thorough review of all software and software platforms used by an institution of higher education that may be linked to foreign adversaries.

(b) The board shall:

(1) Develop a plan to eliminate the usage of software and software platforms hosted, operated, or owned by foreign adversary countries; and

(2) Adopt policies that prohibit the future utilizing or contracting with entities domiciled in, or controlled or owned by companies or other entities domiciled in foreign adversary countries that host, operate, or own software and software platforms.

SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any provision of this act or the application of this act to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of this act are declared severable.

/s/Painter

APPROVED: 4/8/25