

By: Senator E. Cheatham

SENATE RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING THE GROWTH OF QUALITY, AFFORDABLE, ONLINE
EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SYSTEM; AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

SUPPORTING THE GROWTH OF QUALITY,
AFFORDABLE, ONLINE EDUCATION IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, public policy such as the Morrill Act of 1862 and the G.I. Bill of 1944 set a precedent in the United States that broadened the access to higher education in order to allow for upward economic, social, and intellectual mobility for all Americans, which made the United States the envy of the world; and

WHEREAS, we live in a time when access to and completion of a postsecondary education is increasingly important to the economic viability of our state and the quality of life of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Arkansas ranks near the bottom of the United States in percentage of adults with college degrees, and Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe has charged lawmakers, business leaders, and higher education institutions to promote policies that will dramatically increase the number of Arkansans with postsecondary degrees by the year 2025; and

WHEREAS, the cost to students for a quality postsecondary education continues to rise as enrollment growth has far outpaced increases in state



funding for Arkansas's institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS, Governor Beebe and the General Assembly have remained supportive of funding higher education during difficult economic times in which other states have dramatically reduced funding; and

WHEREAS, because of job and family obligations, thousands of Arkansans are unable to access or complete the educational programs provided on the state's existing two-year and four-year college and university campuses; and

WHEREAS, advancements in modern technology make it possible to deliver high-quality, affordable, postsecondary courses and degree programs to anyone with access to a computer or even a mobile device; and

WHEREAS, these technological advances are being utilized across the world to help lower the cost of higher education and improve the retention and completion rates of students; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas has passed a resolution charging its president and campus leadership to explore the coordination and expansion of quality, affordable, accessible, online courses and degree programs,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the Senate applauds the efforts of the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas and the leadership of the University of Arkansas System and its campuses to further develop strategies and methods of delivery that will utilize innovative technologies to allow Arkansas students to graduate on time and provide greater access to those unserved and underserved Arkansans who require flexible, convenient, educational options in order to reach their full potential.