

## HOUSE REPUBLICAN STAFF ANALYSIS

Bill:	HF 295/HSB 57	House Committee: <b>PASSED on 2/5/25 (7-3)</b>
Committee:	Education	House Floor: <b>PASSED on 3/18/25 (65-32)</b>
Floor Manager	Representative Wills	Senate Floor: <b>PASSED on 4/17/25 (32-15)</b>
Date:	February 5, 2025	Governor: <b>SIGNED on 5/6/25</b>
Staff:	Kristin Rozeboom (1-3015)	

### Accreditation Autonomy Act

- Changes references from “Higher Learning Commission” to “any federally recognized accreditor of postsecondary educational institutions.”
- Any adverse action taken by the accreditor on the institution violates this act and civil action may be brought by the AG.

### Section by Section Analysis

#### Section 1. Short Title

This Act shall be known and may be cited as the “Accreditation Autonomy Act.”

#### Section 2. Section 147A.1(13)

Removes “higher learning commission” and replaces with “any federally recognized accreditor of postsecondary educational institutions.”

#### Section 3. Section 147A.17(1)

Removes “higher learning commission” and replaces with “any federally recognized accreditor of postsecondary educational institutions.”

#### Section 4. Section 156.183(1)(a),(b), & (c)

Removes “higher learning commission” and replaces with “any federally recognized accreditor of postsecondary educational institutions.”

#### Section 5. Section 260C.47(1)

Removes “higher learning commission” and replaces with “any federally recognized accreditor of postsecondary educational institutions.”

#### Section 6. Section 261K.1 Definitions—New Section

For purposes of this chapter, unless context otherwise requires:

“Accrediting agency” means an entity that provides accreditation of public institutions of higher education and that is not a government agency.

“Public institution of higher education” means an institution of higher learning governed by the Board of Regents or a community college.

*Section 7. Section 261K.2 Accrediting agencies—adverse action against institutions for compliance with state law prohibited*

An accrediting agency shall not take any adverse action against a public institution of higher education for complying with a state law or refusing to violate state law.

Any adverse action taken by an accrediting agency, in whole or in part, on the institution’s compliance with a state law or refusal to violate a state law constitutes a violation of this section subject to the below.

*Section 8. Section 261K.3 Civil Action—New Section*

A public institution of higher education that is negatively affected by adverse action taken against the institution by an accrediting agency may bring a civil action against the accrediting agency in this state if authorized by the AG. The AG may bring the action on behalf of the institution and obtain injunctive relief and liquidated damages in the amount of the federal financial aid received by the institution in the academic year preceding the violation, as well as court costs and reasonable attorney fees.

*Section 9. Effective Date*

Takes effect upon enactment.