

1 State of Arkansas
2 89th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2013

SR 19

4
5 By: Senator E. Cheatham

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7 **SENATE RESOLUTION**

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

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13 **Subtitle**

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

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

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

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

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



1 funding for Arkansas's institutions of higher education; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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