

Bill Summary
2nd Session of the 59th Legislature

Bill No.:	HB 1181
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Bill Analysis

HB 1181 creates the Research and Education Protection Act of 2024. It requires public schools and institutions of higher education that have directly or indirectly received any gift with any value from any foreign source from a country of concern after Dec. 31, 2013, to disclose the gifts within 60 days to the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education or the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, respectively. It directs such information to be forwarded to the Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES), which shall maintain a public web portal to disclose information on past gifts. It directs the State Auditor and Inspector to inspect or audit a past gift or gift agreement upon request from the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, or the Speaker of the House.

The bill directs public schools and institutions of higher education that have been offered directly or indirectly a gift with any value from a foreign source from a country of origin after the effective date of the act to report such gift to the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education or the State Regents, respectively. It directs such information to be forwarded to OMES, which shall issue a final decision on whether and under what conditions a gift may be accepted. The measure also directs public schools and institutions of higher education that have directly or indirectly entered into a contract with any value from a foreign source from a country of concern after Dec. 31, 2013, to disclose such contracts within 60 days to the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education or the State Regents, respectively.

The measure directs the information to be forwarded to OMES, which shall maintain a public web portal to disclose information on past contracts. It directs the State Auditor and Inspector to inspect or audit a past contract upon request from the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, or the Speaker of the House. The measure directs a public school or institution of higher education that has been offered or has proposed directly or indirectly any contract with any value from or with a foreign source from a country of concern after the effective date of the act to report it to the State Board of Education and State Department of Education or the State Regents, respectively. It directs the information to be forwarded to OMES, which shall make a final decision on whether and under what conditions a contract may be entered into.

The measure states that if a public school or institution of higher education knowingly, willfully, or negligently fails to disclose the information required by the act, it shall be subject to a civil penalty of 105% of the amount of the undisclosed gift or contract, which shall be payable only from non-state funds. It states that in the absence of enforcement from the State Board of

Education or the State Regents, the Attorney General or the Office of the State Treasurer may bring civil action to enforce the act. It provides immunity from employment discipline or civil liability for an employee of a school or institution of higher education who in good faith reports an undisclosed gift or contract.

The bill prohibits a public school or institution of higher education from participating in any cultural exchange agreement with a foreign source from a country of concern or an entity controlled by a country of concern if the agreement meets certain conditions. It directs the substance of such agreements to be shared with certain federal agencies and OMES. It prohibits any students' or scholars' association affiliated with a public school or institution of higher education from accepting any gift or grant from a foreign source in a country of concern or entering into any contract or agreement with a foreign source in a country of concern. It directs public schools and institutions of higher education that establish certain exchange programs to adopt a policy prioritizing certain partnerships.

The bill requires each institution of higher education or affiliate thereof that has a research budget of \$10 million or more to screen certain employment applicants and graduate and undergraduate students applying for certain positions. It requires the president of each institution of higher education or affiliate thereof to designate a research integrity office to review all materials submitted as required by certain employment and research applicants. It directs institutions of higher education to adopt a policy prioritizing foreign researchers in a certain order. It also requires institutions of higher education with a research budget of \$10 million or more to establish an international travel approval and monitoring program. It allows an institution of higher education to enter into a new or renew an existing academic partnership with an institution located in a country of concern if there are sufficient safeguards. It grants the board of regents of an institution of higher education, in consultation with the Attorney General, full discretion to reject or terminate such partnerships. The measure also directs the governor to appoint an individual responsible for the Report on Foreign Influence in Higher Education.

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