

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1650
By: Mercer
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

On February 7, 2003, students at the University of Texas-San Antonio voted to approve an increase in the Student Union fee and the Recreational Facility fee. With more than 3,100 electronic ballots submitted, students voted to approve a fee increase to support enhanced programs at the Recreation and Wellness Center and a \$25 million expansion to the University Center.

The original University Center (UC) was completed in 1986 with 97,000 square feet added in 1996. Despite the increase, the UC has been unable to keep up with current demands for use of space, turning away over 100 student organizations reservations request each month. As more students chose to participate in campus life, the current space for student organization has become inadequate. Some traditional campus wide programs have outgrown current facilities on the 1604 campus. Dining space operations and concepts need to be expanded to meet the needs of the ever-growing student population.

The increased Recreational Facility fee is necessary to maintain and possibly expand the current hours of operation for the recreation center at one of the state's fastest growing universities. Additional funds will assist staff to add programming and services, such as outdoor adventure activities; club sports teams, fitness classes, intramural sports activities and special events.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 54.532(a), Education Code to increase the maximum amount to be charged for the student union fee at The University of Texas-San Antonio from \$75 to \$150.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 54.543, Education Code by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (g), as follows:

(a) Provides for an increase in the recreational facility fee that can be charged to a student at The University of Texas-San Antonio. Prohibits the fee from exceeding \$100.

(g) Provides that the board may not increase the amount of the recreational facility fee by more than 10 percent in any academic year without approval by a majority of the students participating in a general student election for that purpose.

SECTION 3. Provides that the change in law made by this Act applies only to fees imposed for a semester or term that begins on or after the effective date of the Act.

SECTION 4. Provides that the Act takes immediate effect upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2003.