

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2860
By: Morrison
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

H.B. 2860 amends the Education Code to include for the provision of higher education assistance for the spouses and immediate families of those who have served in recent American conflicts involving the campaign against terrorism, and any future official conflict engaged in by the United States Military. Section 54.203 of the code presently provides educational assistance to the spouses and families of military personnel who have served in every American conflict from the Spanish American War through the Persian Gulf War. The men and women who have and will serve in the campaign against terrorism and future official conflicts are equally worthy of this benefit.

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

HB 2860 amends Section 54.203(a) and (g) and adds Subsection (b-1), Education Code, to provide a tuition and fees exemption for all persons honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States after serving on active military duty, excluding training, for more than 180 days and who served a portion of their active duty during Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Noble Eagle, or the national emergency that on September 14, 2001, the President proclaimed as having begun on September 11, 2001. The bill provides that the exemptions are also extended to a spouse of an individual who lost their life while serving these operations, provided they are a Texas resident.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Act takes effect immediately and applies beginning with the 2003-2004 academic year 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, and applies beginning with the first academic term that begins after December 31, 2003.