

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 503
By: Ogden
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, there is no regulation requiring information about general academic institutions to be posted on the institution's website. Information is important for prospective college students and their parents in making an informed choice when picking a college. As proposed, S.B. 503 requires general academic institutions to provide to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), for posting on a website, information on tuition and fees for residents and nonresidents; descriptions of departments, schools or certificate or degree program with a national or state reputation for excellence; retention and graduation rates; and job placement statistics. S.B. 503 requires this mandate to apply to information regarding the Spring 2004 semester and authorizes THECB to adopt standards to facilitate comparisons among different institutions' information.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 51.968, Education Code).

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 51Z, Education Code, by adding Section 51.968, as follows:

Sec. 51.968. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION REGARDING STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS. (a) Defines "institution of higher education" as the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) Requires each institution of higher education to post on its website and provide to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) certain information.

(c) Requires THECB, by rule, to establish standards and adopt formats for the provision and posting of the information under Subsection (b).

(d) Requires the institution of higher education to post on its website and provide to THECB updated information, as soon as practicable.

SECTION 2. (a) Provides that SECTION 1 of this act applies beginning with spring semester 2004.

(b) Requires THECB to adopt the required rules as soon as practicable after this Act takes effect.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or 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.

