

By: Chavez

H.R. No. 501

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, In a highly competitive employment market where an
2 increasing number of job openings require a bachelor's degree or
3 even an advanced degree, a college grade point average (GPA) can
4 make a crucial difference when a student is vying for a high-paying
5 job or seeking admission to a prestigious graduate school or
6 postgraduate program, or simply when attempting to enroll in
7 upper-division courses within an already chosen field of study, and
8 earnest students who wish to improve or maintain a high GPA may need
9 to retake one or more courses in hopes of attaining better grades;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, There is, however, no uniform statewide policy
12 governing how institutions calculate overall GPAs in circumstances
13 of course repetition, and some institutions use the higher grade in
14 lieu of the lower grade, regardless of which grade the student
15 earned first, while others use the later grade to replace the
16 earlier grade, even if the later grade is lower than the earlier
17 grade; and still other institutions include both grades, thus
18 mathematically diluting the effect of any improvement in
19 performance and reducing the incentive to work toward better
20 scholastic results; and

21 WHEREAS, By some of these policies, some institutions
22 actually short-change students who wish to improve their academic
23 records and, consequently, those students' prospects for later
24 success; and

1 WHEREAS, The lack of uniformity is particularly worthy of
2 concern given the frequency of student transfers between Texas'
3 state-funded institutions of post-secondary learning; and

4 WHEREAS, With the impact of rulings by federal courts in the
5 recent Hopwood case, and the continuing need to recruit and retain
6 ethnic minority students in Texas' network of higher education
7 campuses so as to more closely reflect the state's diverse
8 demographics, any policy which has the direct or indirect effect of
9 mathematically diluting a student's true and actual record of
10 academic achievement is clearly inappropriate and should be
11 revised; and

12 WHEREAS, Because Texas residents' college education is
13 largely subsidized by the state with some of the lowest tuition
14 rates in the nation, it would be fair for the student to bear some of
15 the financial costs of repeating a course in the form of a
16 reasonable additional fee, but it is most important to create a
17 uniform policy for calculating the grade point averages of students
18 who repeat courses that is applicable to all students and that does
19 not act as a disincentive for enhanced learning; and

20 WHEREAS, Students who repeat courses are committed to their
21 higher education and their academic achievement, and it is in the
22 best interest of this state not to minimize their efforts; now,
23 therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
25 Legislature hereby direct its Committee on Higher Education to
26 conduct a study of the calculation of student grade point averages
27 at public colleges and universities and of additional and modest

1 fees that may be assessed on students who retake certain classes, as
2 well as considering the most equitable manner of determining the
3 number of credit hours to be accrued for repeating a particular
4 course and whether a superceded grade should be expunged, or be
5 retained, on the student's transcript; and, be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the committee specifically study the effect on
7 a student's GPA of repeating an undergraduate course, the various
8 methods for determining which of the multiple grades earned for the
9 same course is to be factored in the calculation of such
10 averages--provided that the content of the course has not changed
11 significantly since it was first undertaken--and the adoption of
12 uniform policies applicable to all students at each institution;
13 and, be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the committee also study the feasibility and
15 impact of allowing public colleges and universities to charge
16 additional and modest fees for any courses that a student takes more
17 than once; and, be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the committee submit a full report, including
19 findings and recommendations, to the Texas House of Representatives
20 of the 79th Texas Legislature when it convenes in January 2005.