

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 609
By: Giddings
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, tuition rebate incentives for individuals who complete degree programs without excessive credit hours only apply to undergraduate students at four year institutions. Tuition rebate incentives encourage students to complete their undergraduate studies expeditiously and may save the state money since students taking fewer courses and spending shorter periods of time on campuses cost the state less money.

C.S.H.B. 609 allows qualified students at a public junior college, public technical institute, or general academic teaching institution to receive a tuition rebate incentive if they complete a degree or certificate program of at least 60 credit hours while attempting no more than three hours in excess of the minimum required hours.

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. Provides definitions for the measure. Provides for conforming changes.

Provides that a qualified student at general academic teaching institution is eligible for a rebate of a portion of the undergraduate tuition the student has paid if the student meets certain criteria.

Provides that a qualified student at a public junior college, public technical institute, or general academic teaching institution that offers only freshmen-level and sophomore-level courses is eligible for a rebate of \$500 if the student is awarded an associate degree or other degree or certificate in a program that requires at least 60 semester credit hours and has attempted no more than three hours in excess of the minimum number of semester credit hours required to complete the degree or certificate, including transfer credit hours and course credit earned exclusively by examination.

Provides for students who have not paid \$500 or more in tuition. Provides for students who have transferred from another institution. Provides for increases in the amount of the rebate. Provides for conforming changes.

Provides that the legislature shall appropriate an amount sufficient to reimburse each public junior college for any rebates paid by the college. The Coordinating Board shall transfer the appropriate portion of the amount appropriated to each public junior college in the same manner as the Coordinating Board transfers money allocated to the college under Section 130.003.

States that the rebate does not apply to a student who enters a public junior college or public technical institution for the first time before the 2005 summer session, this provision expires January 1, 2011.

SECTION 2. Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

C.S.H.B. 609 79(R)

This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a two-thirds vote of all 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, 2005.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The substitute makes technical corrections to the eligibility requirements.

The substitute corrects a typographical error and provides for conforming changes.

The substitute deletes language that states that the change in law only applies to a person who graduates on or after the effective date. The substitute adds that the rebate does not apply to students who enter a public junior college or public technical institute for the first time before the 2005 summer session and the subsection expires January 1, 2011.