

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1172
By: Brown, Fred (Zaffirini)
S/C on Higher Education
5/17/2005
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current law allows Texas college students to take an excess of 45 credit hours above their degree program before the institution may charge a higher tuition rate. In addition, the state continues to contribute funding for students enrolled in an institution of higher education up to the 45 credit hour limit. This 45 credit hour limit represents substantial costs to the State of Texas and contributes to the length of time it takes the student graduates.

H.B. 1172 provides that institutions of higher education may charge students a higher tuition rate for any credit hours that are equal to or greater than 115 percent of the required degree program hours. In addition, the state will not contribute funding for students who exceed 115 percent of their degree program requirements. The intention of H.B. 1172 is to save the state money and decrease the length of time in which it takes a student to graduate.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 54.068(a) and (c), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Authorizes an institution of higher education to charge a resident undergraduate student tuition at a higher rate than the rate charged to other resident undergraduate students, not to exceed the rate charged to nonresident undergraduate students, if before the semester or other academic session begins the student has previously attempted a number of semester credit hours for courses taken at any institution of higher education while classified as a resident student for tuition purposes that equals or exceeds 120 percent of the minimum number of semester credit hours, rather than by at least 45 hours, required for completion of the degree program or programs in which the student is enrolled, including minors and double majors, and for completion of any certificate or other special program in which the student is also enrolled, including a program with a study-abroad component.

(c) Provides that Subsection (a) applies only, rather than does not apply, to the tuition charged to a student who initially enrolled as an undergraduate student in an institution of higher education during or after, rather than before, the 1999 fall semester, except that the institution of higher education is prohibited from requiring a student who initially enrolls as an undergraduate student in an institution of higher education before the 2006 fall semester to pay higher tuition as permitted by Subsection (a) until the number of semester credit hours previously attempted by the student as described by that subsection exceeds the number of semester credit hours required for the student's degree program or programs by at least 45 hours.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 61.0595, Education Code, by amending Subsections (a) and (e) and adding Subsections (f) and (g), as follows:

(a) Makes conforming changes.

(c) Makes conforming changes.

(f) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in the formulas established under Section 61.059 (Appropriations), to include without consideration of Subsection (a) funding for semester credit hours earned by a student who initially enrolled as an undergraduate student in any institution of higher education before the 1999 fall semester. Deletes existing text relating to semester credit hours without consideration of Subsection (a).

(g) Requires the savings to the state resulting from the exclusion of funding for excess undergraduate semester credit hours from the funding formulas of the board as required by this section, to the extent practicable, to be used to finance the Toward Excellence, Access, & Success (TEXAS) grant program under Subchapter M (Toward Excellence, Access, & Success (TEXAS) grant program), Chapter 56.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective to the 2005 fall semester.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2005.