

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1725
By: Casteel
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Many communities in Texas, especially in rural areas, have a need to be more competitive in attracting business and industry to their areas. However, current laws and procedures have mandated that communities which need workforce development and academic or technical higher education services must first approach their designated junior colleges to provide these services. However, the junior college is not required to provide these education opportunities and many communities do not feel that they have a means to access the current procedures created by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for off-campus programs and course approval.

H.B. 1725 offers communities in small, rural counties the ability to approach the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to allow another higher education institution to offer courses in the service area of a local junior college if that junior college had refused or was unable to offer the course.

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 - Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to approve a request by an institution of higher education to conduct a lower-division-level vocational or technical course or program at a location in the service area of another junior college district, if that junior college district does not offer the requested course or plan to offer the course within one year of a community's request. A community's request for a course or program consists of certain elements. The board may direct an institution of higher education to discontinue conducting the course or program if good cause can be shown according to certain guidelines.

SECTION 2 - Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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.