

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 296
By: Madla
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Only in existence for three years, Texas A&M--Kingsville System Center--San Antonio, has undergone a dramatic increase in student enrollment which has forced the system center to utilize eight portable buildings as well as fully maximize the existing classroom space. Although S.B. 800, 78th Regular Session, 2003, lowered from 3,500 students to 2,500 students the enrollment threshold required for the center to transform into a fully functional, stand-alone institution, the dilemma now is that, with limited space and students forced to attend classes in portable buildings, the campus is not able to expand to meet that requirement without additional funding for additional classrooms and faculty. Money would be better spent securing the institution's ultimate goal as a fully functional, four-year, stand-alone institution which could be accomplished more expeditiously if the threshold is lowered to 1,000 full-time equivalents in any one semester as certified by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. At that time, the Texas A&M University--Kingsville System Center--San Antonio will be renamed Texas A&M University--San Antonio.

As proposed, S.B. 296, contingent upon the passage of tuition revenue bonds, reduces from 2,500 to 1,000 students the enrollment threshold required for Texas A&M University--Kingsville System Center--San Antonio to become Texas A&M University--San Antonio.

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. Amends Section 87.841(d), Education Code, as follows:

(d) Prohibits Texas A&M University--San Antonio, notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter, from operating as a general academic teaching institution until the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board certifies that enrollment at the Texas A&M University--Kingsville System Center--San Antonio has reached an enrollment equivalent of 1,000 full-time students for one semester if the legislature authorizes certain revenue bonds and the bonds are issued for that purpose. Specifies that the alternative preexisting enrollment equivalent of 2,500 full-time students for one semester is only applicable if the aforementioned conditions are not satisfied.

SECTION 2. Subsection (d), Section 87.861, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter, Texas A&M University--Central Texas may not operate as a general academic teaching institution until the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board certifies that enrollment at the Tarleton State University System Center--Central Texas in Killeen has reached an enrollment equivalent of:

(1) 1,000 full-time students for one semester if the legislature authorizes revenue bonds to be issued to finance educational and related facilities for the institution, and the bonds are issued for that purpose; or

(2) 2,500 full-time students for one semester if the conditions specified by Subdivision (1) are not satisfied.

SECTION 3. Effective date:

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, 2005.