

By: Howard

H.B. No. 530

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

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AN ACT

relating to prohibiting discrimination in awarding state scholarships or other financial aid for higher education based on a person's high school attendance or achievement.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 56, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 56.005 to read as follows:

Sec. 56.005. NONDISCRIMINATION IN FINANCIAL AID AWARDS BASED ON HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OR ACHIEVEMENT. (a) An institution of higher education or state agency that awards financial aid of any kind to students to attend public or private institutions of higher education may not require a person to have attended a public high school or an accredited private high school to be eligible for any form of financial aid the institution or agency awards. A requirement that a person have graduated from high school to be eligible for financial aid must treat a person who presents evidence that the person graduated from an unaccredited private high school or successfully completed a secondary school program in a home school setting the same as a person who graduated from a public high school.

(b) An institution of higher education or state agency may not award a scholarship or other financial aid based on a person's high school grade point average or other measure of a person's academic performance before attending an institution of higher

1 education, other than the person's score on the Scholastic
2 Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT), or a
3 separately scored portion of one of those tests. An institution of
4 higher education or state agency that awards scholarships or other
5 financial aid based on those test scores must consider a person's
6 score on either of those tests, or on comparable portions of either
7 of those tests, and may not limit eligibility or consideration to
8 persons who have test scores for only one of those tests.

9 SECTION 2. Section 56.304(a), Education Code, is amended to
10 read as follows:

11 (a) To be eligible initially for a TEXAS grant, a person
12 must:

13 (1) be a resident of this state as determined by
14 coordinating board rules;

15 (2) meet either of the following academic
16 requirements:

17 (A) be a graduate of a public high school or an
18 accredited or unaccredited private high school, including a home
19 school, in this state who graduated not earlier than the 1998-1999
20 school year [~~and who completed the recommended or advanced high~~
21 ~~school curriculum established under Section 28.002 or 28.025 or its~~
22 ~~equivalent~~]; or

23 (B) have received an associate degree from an
24 eligible institution not earlier than May 1, 2001;

25 (3) meet financial need requirements as defined by the
26 coordinating board;

27 (4) be enrolled in an undergraduate degree or

1 certificate program at an eligible institution;

2 (5) be enrolled as:

3 (A) an entering undergraduate student for at
4 least three-fourths of a full course load for an entering
5 undergraduate student, as determined by the coordinating board, not
6 later than the 16th month after the date of the person's graduation
7 from high school; or

8 (B) an entering student for at least
9 three-fourths of a full course load for an undergraduate student as
10 determined by the coordinating board, not later than the 12th month
11 after the month the person receives an associate degree from an
12 eligible institution;

13 (6) have applied for any available financial aid or
14 assistance; and

15 (7) comply with any additional nonacademic
16 requirement adopted by the coordinating board under this
17 subchapter.

18 SECTION 3. Section 56.304(f), Education Code, is repealed.

19 SECTION 4. The change in law made by this Act applies
20 beginning with student financial aid awarded for the 2006-2007
21 academic year. The change in law does not affect student financial
22 aid awarded for an academic period before that academic year, and
23 the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

24 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
25 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
26 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
27 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

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1 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.