

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 868
By: Haggerty
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The University of Texas at El Paso has experienced major growth since the current Swimming and Fitness Center opened in 1996. Consistent with the current Campus Master Plan, the institution has identified new demand for indoor and outdoor recreational sports facilities. The university hired an external consultant in March 2003 to determine the need for expansion and development of the Student Recreation Complex. Students have subsequently expressed interest in expanding their recreational opportunities and believe now is the time to pursue a student referendum.

In order for the University to meet the growing interest in sports and recreation of a rapidly growing student population it is critical that the existing facilities of the Student Recreation Complex be expanded. Existing recreation facilities are over-used and impossible to maintain at an optimal level. The existing facilities do not accommodate the growing use or meet the current trends in collegiate recreation.

CSHB 868 imposes a recreational fee for new and existing recreational sports facilities and programs at the University of Texas at El Paso.

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: Sections 54.541 (a) and (c) of the Education Code are amended to authorize the board of regents of the University of Texas System to charge each enrolled student at the University of Texas at El Paso a recreational facility fee. The fee may not exceed \$70 per student for a term or semester of 10 weeks or more, and may not exceed \$50 for any other term or semester. This changes the fee from the previous amount of \$12.

States that for a term or semester before the 2009 fall semester, a fee imposed under this section may not exceed \$20 per student for a semester or summer session. This subsection expires September 1, 2009.

The fee may not be increased unless the amount of the increase is approved by a majority vote of those students participating in a general student election called at The University of Texas at El Paso for that purpose.

SECTION 2: The change in this law applies to fees charged beginning with the 2007 fall semester. A fee charged for a term or semester before the 2007 fall semester is covered by the law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3: Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

C.S.H.B. 868 80(R)

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

New language was added which states that for a term or semester before the 2009 fall semester, a fee imposed under this section may not exceed \$20 per student for a semester or summer session. Provides for an expiration date on September 1, 2009.