

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3215
By: Branch
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Legislature created the Advanced Research Program (ARP) in 1985 when it added a line item called Advanced Technological Research Program for \$35 million to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's budget in the General Appropriations Act. Although the program lacked statutory authority, a rider directed the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to use the funds for a competitive research grant program in emerging technology in "microelectronics, energy, telecommunications, aerospace, biotechnology materials and other areas of science and technology that hold substantial promise of great benefit to the people of Texas."

The rider limited the program to general academic teachings institutions and "another agency of higher education that has the demonstrated exceptional capability to attract federal, state and private funding of scientific and technical research and has an exceptionally strong research staff, equipment and facilities." No more than two-thirds of the funds may be awarded to the University of Texas and Texas A&M University.

The purpose of H.B. 3215 is to allow some independent and private institutions of higher education to compete for ARP dollars.

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: Section 142.001 (3) of the Education Code is amended to make a private or independent institution of higher education eligible to participate in the advanced research program administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

SECTION 2: Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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