

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 285
By: Shapiro
Education
8/8/2007
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In recent student elections, the students at The University of Texas at Dallas (UT-Dallas) voted to implement three new fees—a fee to fund shuttle services around campus and other parts of the city, a fee to build a new student services building, and a fee to fund the school's Division III Athletic Program. However, UT-Dallas does not have statutory authority to charge such fees.

S.B. 285 provides the statutory framework for the board of regents of The University of Texas System to charge UT-Dallas students certain fees.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter E, Chapter 54, Education Code, by adding Sections 54.5311, 54.5312, and 54.5313, as follows:

Sec. 54.5311. TRANSPORTATION FEE; THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS. (a) Authorizes the board of regents of The University of Texas System (board) to charge all enrolled students at The University of Texas at Dallas (UT-Dallas) a transportation fee for the sole purpose of financing transportation services, including capital expenses, for enrolled students. Sets forth limits on the amount of the fee.

(b) Prohibits the imposition of the fee unless approved by a majority vote of the enrolled students of the university who participate in a general student election held for that purpose.

(c) Prohibits the amount of the fee from being increased to an amount that exceeds the total amount of the fee as last approved by a student vote under Subsection (b) by 10 percent or more unless the increase has been approved by such a vote.

(d) Requires revenue from the fee to be deposited to the UT-Dallas Transportation Fee Account and be expended in accordance with a budget submitted to and approved by the board. Requires the board to make changes to the budget it considers necessary before approving the budget and to impose a sufficient fee, within the limits provided by this section, to meet the approved budget.

(e) Prohibits the fee from being considered in determining the maximum amount of student service fees that may be charged under Section 54.503 (Student Services Fees).

(f) Requires the university to hold in reserve any fee revenue in excess of the amount necessary to meet current transportation services expenses and apply it only to future transportation services expenses.

Sec. 54.5312. STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING FEE; THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS. (a) Authorizes the board to charge all enrolled students at UT-Dallas a student services building fee for the sole purpose of financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and improving a student services building at the university.

(b) Sets forth limits on the amount of the fee.

(c) Prohibits the imposition of the fee unless approved by a majority vote of the enrolled students of the university who participate in a general student election held for that purpose.

(d) Prohibits the amount of the fee from being increased to an amount that exceeds the total amount of the fee as last approved by a student vote under Subsection (c) by 10 percent or more unless the increase has been approved by such a vote.

(e) Requires revenue from the fee to be deposited to the UT-Dallas Student Services Building Fee Account.

(f) Prohibits the fee from being considered in determining the maximum amount of student service fees that may be charged under Section 54.503.

(g) Authorizes the board to pledge revenue from the fee for payment of obligations issued for authorized purposes pursuant to the UT System's financing system.

Sec. 54.5313. INTRAMURAL AND INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS FEE; THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS. (a) Authorizes the board to charge all enrolled students at UT-Dallas an intramural and intercollegiate athletics fee. Sets forth limits on the amount of the fee.

(b) Prohibits the imposition of the fee unless approved by a majority vote of the enrolled students of the university who participate in a general student election held for that purpose.

(c) Prohibits the amount of the fee from being increased to an amount that exceeds the total amount of the fee as last approved by a student vote under Subsection (b) by 10 percent or more unless the increase has been approved by such a vote.

(d) Prohibits the fee from being considered in determining the maximum amount of student service fees that may be charged under Section 54.503.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective to the beginning of the fall 2007 semester.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.