

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1601
By: West, Royce
Higher Education
Committee Report (Amended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Joint Admission Medical Program (program) was created by the 77th Legislature, Regular Session, 2001, to encourage qualified, economically disadvantaged students to prepare for and attend medical school. The program is operated in partnership with all eight Texas medical schools, 31 general academic teaching institutions, and 34 private or independent institutions of higher education. The program provides scholarships, mentoring, summer enrichment programs, and guaranteed admission to medical school if certain requirements are met.

As proposed, S.B. 1601 removes the 10 percent limitation on program openings for private or independent institutions of higher education, allocates one opening each year to each private or independent institution, and allows for up to 30 percent of the openings in certain situations to be allocated for such institutions. The bill updates the eligibility requirements for admission to the program by allowing a student to have enrolled at an institution of higher education, including a community college, and removes nontraditional students from application to the program. It modifies the deadline date for submitting applications to the program. S.B. 1601 expands the discretion of the institutions in selecting a director to implement the program, and it clarifies the scope of the Joint Admission Medical Program Council's ability to accept gifts and raise money.

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 Sections 51.824 (a) and (b) of the Education Code to add language, delete language and make conforming changes. Deletes the provisions applying the actions required of the Joint Admission Medical Program Council (council) to nontraditional students.

Requires the council to annually select for admission to the Joint Admission Medical Program (program) two, rather than at least two, eligible undergraduate students who are enrolled as sophomores at that institution, and one eligible undergraduate student who is enrolled as a sophomore from each private or independent institution of higher education. Deletes the provision requiring the council to allocate 10 percent of the total program openings on a rotation basis to private or independent institutions of higher education. Requires the council to allocate the remaining program openings to participating, rather than general academic teaching, institutions as the council determines to be appropriate.

Requires the council, if there are insufficient program openings to accommodate two students from each general academic teaching institution and one student from each private or independent institution of higher education, to select students for admission to the program to achieve the purpose of this subchapter, with no more than 30 percent of the program openings allocated to students from private or independent institutions of higher education.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 51.826 of the Education Code, relating to the eligibility for admission to the program. Sets forth the eligibility requirements for admission to the program or for selection as a program alternate for undergraduate students, adding the requirement that the student be enrolled at an institution of higher education not later than the first fall semester after the student's graduation from high school and that the student must be enrolled at a general academic teaching institution of higher education or a private or independent institution of higher

education at the time of application to the program. Requires the student to apply for admission to the program not later than the date designated by the council during the fall semester, rather than September 1, of the student's sophomore year. Makes conforming, nonsubstantive and clarifying changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 51.8265(b) of the Education Code to provide that an identified student who expresses an interest in participating in the program is entitled to regular meetings with an academic or health professions advisor, or to a program faculty director, to monitor the student's academic progress and advise the student in academic course work and career choices.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 51.829(a) of the Education Code to delete existing provisions requiring agreements set forth in this section to apply to nontraditional student described.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 51.830 of the Education Code to make conforming changes to include an academic or health professions advisor.

SECTION 6. Amends Section 51.831 of the Education Code to make conforming changes to include and academic or health professions advisor.

SECTION 7. Amends Section 51.833(a) of the Education Code to authorize the council to accept a gift, grant, devise, or bequest of money, securities, service, or property to carry out any purpose of this subchapter, including funds raised or services provided by a volunteer or volunteer group to promote the work of the council, rather than authorizing the council to solicit and accept gifts and grants from any public or private source for the purposes of this subchapter. Authorizes the council's administrative staff to participate in the establishment and operation of an affiliated nonprofit organization whose purpose is to raise funds for or provide services or other benefits to the council.

SECTION 8. Repeals Section 51.832 of the Education Code.

SECTION 9. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 10. Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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

EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS

Committee amendment number 1 amends SECTION 1 of the bill, Subsection (b), Section 51.824 of the Education Code by striking language. Strikes the following language, "the council shall select students for admission to the program to achieve the purpose of this subchapter, with no more than 30 percent of the program openings allocated to students from private or independent institutions of higher education." Substitutes the language, "as appropriate to achieve the purpose of this subchapter the council shall select for admission to the program eligible sophomore-level students who are enrolled in the participating institutions, with not more than 15 percent of the total program openings for any year to be allocated to eligible sophomore-level students who are enrolled at private or independent institutions of higher education."

Amends language in SECTION 2 of the bill by striking "the date designated by the council" and substituting "a date, as designated by the council, that occurs." Amends language in SECTION 3 of the bill by striking language and adding the statement "if the student is enrolled at a general academic teaching institution or a private or independent institution of higher education, an" identified student.