

By: Branch

H.B. No. 612

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to participation by private or independent institutions of higher education in the tuition equalization grant program.

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

SECTION 1. Section 61.222, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 61.222. APPROVED COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES [~~INSTITUTIONS~~]. An approved college [~~The coordinating board shall approve only those private or independent colleges~~] or university for purposes of this subchapter is a [~~universities that are~~] private or independent institution [~~institutions~~] of higher education as defined by Section 61.003 [~~or are located within this state and meet the same program standards and accreditation as public institutions of higher education as determined by the board~~].

SECTION 2. Section 61.2251(c), Education Code, as added by Chapter 1230, Acts of the 79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005, is amended to read as follows:

(c) After qualifying for a tuition equalization grant under Subsection (b), a person may receive a tuition equalization grant in a subsequent academic year in which the person is enrolled at an approved college or university [~~institution~~] only if the person:

(1) meets the requirements of Subsection (b);

(2) completed at least:

1 (A) 24 semester credit hours in the person's most
2 recent academic year, if the person is enrolled in an undergraduate
3 degree or certificate program; or

4 (B) 18 semester credit hours in the person's most
5 recent academic year, if the person is enrolled in a graduate or
6 professional degree program; and

7 (3) has earned an overall grade point average of at
8 least 2.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent on coursework
9 previously attempted at public or private institutions of higher
10 education.

11 SECTION 3. Section 61.227(a), Education Code, is amended to
12 read as follows:

13 (a) On receipt of a certification of the amount of financial
14 need from an approved college or university [~~institution~~], the
15 coordinating board shall certify the amount of the tuition
16 equalization grant based on financial need but not to exceed a grant
17 amount of more than that specified in the appropriation by the
18 legislature, or more than the difference between the tuition at the
19 private institution attended and the tuition at public colleges and
20 universities.

21 SECTION 4. Section 61.756(a), Education Code, is amended to
22 read as follows:

23 (a) The board, in consultation with the advisory committee
24 appointed under Section 61.757, shall determine the maximum amount
25 of any scholarship awarded under this subchapter. The scholarship
26 may be spent by the recipient on the expenses for tuition, fees,
27 books, supplies, and living expenses incurred by the student in

1 connection with the student's fifth year of an accounting program.
2 Scholarships shall be made available to eligible students
3 attending:

- 4 (1) any institution of higher education; or
- 5 (2) any nonprofit independent institution that is an
6 approved college or university for purposes of the tuition
7 equalization grant program under Subchapter F [~~by the board under~~
8 ~~Section 61.222~~].

9 SECTION 5. Section 487.101(3), Government Code, is amended
10 to read as follows:

- 11 (3) "Postsecondary educational institution" means:
 - 12 (A) an institution of higher education, as
13 defined by Section 61.003, Education Code;
 - 14 (B) a nonprofit, independent institution that is
15 an approved college or university for purposes of the tuition
16 equalization grant program under Subchapter F, Chapter 61 [~~under~~
17 ~~Section 61.222~~], Education Code; or
 - 18 (C) a nonprofit, health-related school or
19 program accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and
20 Schools, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the American
21 Osteopathic Association, the Board of Nurse Examiners, or, in the
22 case of allied health, an accrediting body recognized by the United
23 States Department of Education.

24 SECTION 6. Section 487.151(2), Government Code, is amended
25 to read as follows:

- 26 (2) "Postsecondary educational institution" means:
 - 27 (A) an institution of higher education, as

1 defined by Section 61.003, Education Code;

2 (B) a nonprofit, independent institution that is
3 an approved college or university for purposes of the tuition
4 equalization grant program under Subchapter F, Chapter 61 [~~under~~
5 ~~Section 61.222~~], Education Code; or

6 (C) a nonprofit, health-related school or
7 program accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and
8 Schools, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the American
9 Osteopathic Association, the Board of Nurse Examiners, or, in the
10 case of allied health, an accrediting body recognized by the United
11 States Department of Education.

12 SECTION 7. The change in law made by this Act applies
13 beginning with tuition equalization grants awarded for the 2008
14 fall semester. Grants awarded for a semester or term before the
15 2008 fall semester are covered by the applicable law in effect
16 immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the former
17 law is continued in effect for that purpose.

18 SECTION 8. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
19 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
20 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
21 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
22 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.