

1-1 By: Zaffirini S.B. No. 1052
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 1, 2007; March 14, 2007, read
1-3 first time and referred to Subcommittee on Higher Education;
1-4 April 18, 2007, reported favorably from Committee on Education by
1-5 the following vote: Yeas 6, Nays 1; April 18, 2007, sent to
1-6 printer.)

1-7 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-8 AN ACT

1-9 relating to tuition credits for students who complete the core
1-10 curriculum at two-year public institutions of higher education.

1-11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-12 SECTION 1. Chapter 56, Education Code, is amended by adding
1-13 Subchapter Z to read as follows:

1-14 SUBCHAPTER Z. OTHER STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

1-15 Sec. 56.901. TUITION CREDITS FOR STUDENT COMPLETING CORE
1-16 CURRICULUM AT TWO-YEAR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION. (a) In
1-17 this section:

1-18 (1) "Coordinating board" means the Texas Higher
1-19 Education Coordinating Board.

1-20 (2) "General academic teaching institution," "public
1-21 junior college," "public state college," and "public technical
1-22 institute" have the meanings assigned by Section 61.003.

1-23 (b) The coordinating board shall establish a program under
1-24 which an eligible student is entitled to receive credit against a
1-25 portion of the tuition charged by a general academic teaching
1-26 institution to the student during the student's enrollment at that
1-27 institution.

1-28 (c) A student is eligible to receive tuition credit under
1-29 this section if the student:

1-30 (1) is a resident of this state;

1-31 (2) enrolls at a public junior college, public state
1-32 college, or public technical institute not later than the first
1-33 fall semester following the student's graduation from high school;

1-34 (3) successfully completes the core curriculum at a
1-35 public junior college, public state college, or public technical
1-36 institute before the third fall semester following the student's
1-37 graduation from high school, regardless of whether the student:

1-38 (A) remains continuously enrolled at the same
1-39 college or institute during that period; or

1-40 (B) completes any portion of the core curriculum
1-41 through concurrent enrollment;

1-42 (4) after completing the core curriculum as described
1-43 by Subdivision (3), enrolls at a general academic teaching
1-44 institution not later than the third fall semester following the
1-45 student's graduation from high school;

1-46 (5) meets financial need requirements prescribed by
1-47 coordinating board rule; and

1-48 (6) complies with any additional eligibility
1-49 requirements prescribed by coordinating board rule.

1-50 (d) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (e), an
1-51 eligible student is entitled to a tuition credit in an amount equal
1-52 to one-fourth of the total amount of tuition charged for each
1-53 semester or other academic term in which the student is enrolled at
1-54 the general academic teaching institution, excluding tuition
1-55 charged under Section 54.0513 or another provision authorizing the
1-56 institution to establish tuition rates. A student may use a tuition
1-57 credit only for the semester or term for which it is awarded.

1-58 (e) Except as provided by Subsection (k), a student is not
1-59 eligible for a tuition credit under this section for a semester or
1-60 other term that begins after the second anniversary of the date the
1-61 student first enrolled at the general academic teaching
1-62 institution.

1-63 (f) For the applicable enrollment period, a general
1-64 academic teaching institution shall apply to a student's tuition

2-1 charges the amount of the tuition credit to which the student is
2-2 entitled.

2-3 (g) As soon as practicable after a tuition credit is used
2-4 under this section, the general academic teaching institution shall
2-5 report to the coordinating board the name of the student using the
2-6 credit and the amount of credit used.

2-7 (h) A general academic teaching institution is entitled to
2-8 reimbursement for the cost of providing a tuition credit to an
2-9 eligible student under this section. The coordinating board shall
2-10 reimburse the institution in the appropriate amount from
2-11 appropriations available for that purpose.

2-12 (i) At the beginning of each school year, each public high
2-13 school in this state shall provide information regarding the
2-14 requirements of the program under this section to each senior
2-15 student enrolled at the high school and to a parent, conservator, or
2-16 guardian of the student. Each public junior college, public state
2-17 college, or public technical institute shall notify each entering
2-18 undergraduate student of the program requirements not later than
2-19 the sixth week of the student's first semester or term.

2-20 (j) The Texas Education Agency and the coordinating board
2-21 jointly shall prepare a publication that includes the information
2-22 required to be provided under Subsection (i) and shall post that
2-23 publication on the website of each in a form that enables a public
2-24 high school, public junior college, public state college, or public
2-25 technical institute to reproduce the information for distribution
2-26 to students, parents, and other persons as required by this
2-27 section.

2-28 (k) The coordinating board shall adopt rules to administer
2-29 this section, including rules requiring an eligible student to
2-30 apply for a tuition credit under this section and to provide the
2-31 information required to verify the student's eligibility. The
2-32 rules must provide procedures by which an otherwise eligible
2-33 student may be granted additional time to receive or use tuition
2-34 credits under this section if the student shows hardship or other
2-35 good cause that prevented the student from successfully completing
2-36 the core curriculum, using the tuition credits, or enrolling in an
2-37 institution within the applicable period prescribed by this
2-38 section. For purposes of this subsection, hardship or other good
2-39 cause includes:

2-40 (1) a severe illness or other debilitating condition;

2-41 (2) responsibility for the care of a sick or injured
2-42 person or person otherwise in need of assistance; or

2-43 (3) active duty or other service in the United States
2-44 armed forces.

2-45 (l) A student may not receive a tuition credit under this
2-46 section for a semester or term before the 2009 fall semester, and
2-47 may not establish eligibility for a credit based in any part on
2-48 higher education coursework completed before the 2007 fall
2-49 semester. This subsection expires January 1, 2011.

2-50 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date
2-51 of this Act, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall
2-52 adopt rules for the administration of Section 56.901, Education
2-53 Code, as added by this Act. The coordinating board may adopt the
2-54 initial rules in the manner provided by law for emergency rules.

2-55 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
2-56 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
2-57 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
2-58 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
2-59 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

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