

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 160
By: Deshotel
Corrections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

C.S.H.B. 160 creates an Education and Self-Sufficiency Program to assist students at risk for dropping out of school; to offer after-school enrichment programs; to provide career, technical education, and job readiness training and job placement assistance for high school students at risk of dropping out of school; and to provide mentoring for high school students who are qualified and who are planning to pursue postsecondary education. The program is administered by the Texas Education Agency.

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

C.S.H.B. 160 amends the Education Code to establish the Education and Self-Sufficiency Program and require the Texas Education Agency to administer the program. The bill requires the commissioner of education to designate a state director for the program to coordinate community-based efforts to accomplish the purposes of the grant initiative under the program. The bill requires the commissioner of education, subject to available funding, to award grants to school districts, school campuses, and community-based organizations participating in the program to:

- assist students who are under the age of 21 and satisfy the criteria to be categorized as at risk of dropping out of school to develop a foundation for a well-balanced and appropriate education from early childhood education through middle and junior high school through the use of small school campuses that permit highly personal learning environments and offer a culturally sensitive curriculum; a variety of instructional and interactive methods to develop self-respect, self confidence, and a student's leadership skills; and after school enrichment programs;
- provide career and technical education training, job readiness training, and job placement assistance for high school students at risk of dropping out of school; and
- provide at least two years of mentoring for high school students qualified and planning to enroll in postsecondary education, including junior college programs or programs of public technical institutes.

C.S.H.B. 160 requires the commissioner to award grants under the program after receiving and reviewing recommendations from the state director. The bill authorizes the commissioner, before awarding a grant, to require a campus or school district to obtain local matching funds or meet other conditions, including providing assistance in the development of a personal graduation plan for each student enrolled in high school, and requires the commissioner, before awarding a grant, to require a community-based organization to demonstrate a proven track record of successfully working independently in an area identified in the purposes of the program. The bill authorizes the commissioner to accept gifts, grants, or donations from private entities to use in

awarding grants under the program and to coordinate gifts, grants, or donations with federal or other available funding to award grants.

C.S.H.B. 160 authorizes the state director to accept a donation of services or money or other property the director determines furthers the lawful objectives of the program. The bill requires that each donation from a private entity, with the name of the donor and purpose of the donation, be reported in the public records of the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 160 removes a provision included in the original requiring that the Texas Education Agency's administration of the Education and Self-Sufficiency Program be in conjunction with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The substitute requires the commissioner of education to award grants to school districts, school campuses, and community-based organizations participating in the program to implement and accomplish the purposes of the program, whereas the original requires the director to coordinate community-based organizations to accomplish the purposes of the program.

C.S.H.B. 160 differs from the original by changing the elements of the implementation of the program. The substitute adds provisions not in the original requiring program participants to provide career and technical educational training, job readiness training, and job placement assistance for high school students at risk of dropping out of school, and removes provisions included in the original that include in the program vocational education training for high school students who do not plan to pursue a postsecondary education and adult job training for high school graduates who do not plan to pursue a postsecondary education and parents of students, including job readiness training and vocational education training, and job placement assistance to assist those high school graduates and parents in transitioning from job training to the workforce. The substitute differs from the original in its requirement that the program provide at least two years of mentoring for high school students qualified and planning to enroll in postsecondary education programs by adding the specification that such programs include junior college and public technical institute programs.

C.S.H.B. 160 adds provisions not in the original requiring the commissioner to award grants after receiving and reviewing recommendations from the state director and setting forth the commissioner's powers in awarding a grant. The substitute authorizes the commissioner to accept gifts, grants, or donations from private entities to use in awarding grants and to coordinate gifts, grants, or donations with federal or other available funding to award grants, whereas the original requires the state director to solicit and authorizes the director to accept federal funds, state funds, private contributions, grants, and public and school district funds to support the activities of the program. The substitute adds a provision not in the original specifying that a donation required to be reported in the public records of the program refers to a donation from a private entity.