

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 184
By: Alonzo
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently the University of Houston is not authorized to operate a summer optometry career program.

H.B. 184 authorizes the University of Houston to operate a summer optometry career program that prepares highly qualified, economically disadvantaged junior-level, senior-level, and postbaccalaureate students from any public or private institution of higher education for advanced studies and a career in the field of optometry.

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

H.B. 184 amends the Education Code to authorize the University of Houston to operate a summer optometry career program that prepares highly qualified, economically disadvantaged junior-level, senior-level, and postbaccalaureate students from any public or private institution of higher education for advanced studies and a career in the field of optometry. The bill authorizes the program to include courses in improvement of study skills and Optometry Admission Test preparation courses, a review of selected undergraduate academic courses that are prerequisites for admission to advanced degree programs in optometry, academic courses that are designed to familiarize students with the course work in advanced degree programs in optometry, clinical work, and extracurricular activities, including observing professionals in the field of optometry.

H.B. 184 requires the university, to the extent practicable and consistent with program purposes, to operate the program in a manner that may assist students to obtain course credit for the program from their respective institutions of higher education. The bill requires the university to recruit eligible undergraduate or postbaccalaureate students for admission to the program, establish an application process for admitting eligible students to the program, develop reasonable requirements for admission to the program, monitor the implementation of the program, and assist in developing services, including career counseling, to support and encourage the pursuit of advanced studies and careers in the field of optometry.

H.B. 184 authorizes the university to solicit and accept gifts and grants from any public or private source, and it authorizes the legislature to appropriate money for program purposes.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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