

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 602
By: Farabee
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

As a public liberal arts university, Midwestern State University became the first and only Texas university member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, an organization championing the cause of a liberal arts education. Accordingly, the faculty, student body, administration, the board of regents of the university, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's commissioner of higher education have all expressed support for a change in the university's designation as a state college to a designation of the university as a public liberal arts university.

H.B. 602 changes Midwestern State University's designation to a public liberal arts university.

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. 602 amends the Education Code to change the designation of Midwestern State University from a state college to a public liberal arts university. The bill removes antiquated language relating to the university's mission and specifies that the board of regents must operate the university to offer the university's students, consistent with the university's mission, preparation for excellence in a variety of careers and exploration of a variety of interests. The bill requires the university to be equipped as necessary to do its work as well as comparable public institutions of higher education in Texas.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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