

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2425
By: Morrison
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current law requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to design and administer a one-week summer program to take place on the campus of each general academic teaching institution that offers an engineering degree program to expose middle and high school students to mathematics, science, and engineering concepts they are likely to encounter in an engineering degree program and requires the coordinating board to establish and administer a degree scholarship program for students who graduate with certain credentials. These requirements were enacted to address Texas' status as the ninth state among the 10 most populous states in the number of degrees awarded per 1,000 students in science and engineering fields. However, 25 percent of the bachelor's degrees awarded in Texas are from the private colleges and universities in Texas.

To encourage all Texas children to enroll in more math and science classes and remain competitive on a national and global level in those fields of study and to increase the diversity of the program, the noncompetitive grant application procedure needs to be extended to the private colleges and universities.

H.B. 2425 includes Texas private or independent colleges and universities among those colleges and universities on whose campuses the coordinating board may establish a one-week summer program for prospective engineering students and whose engineering students are eligible to participate in the coordinating board's engineering scholarship program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 3 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2425 amends the Education Code to include a private or independent institution of higher education that offers an engineering degree program among those institutions of higher education on whose campuses the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is required to establish a one-week summer program designed to expose middle and high school students to math, science, and engineering concepts that a student in an engineering degree program may encounter.

H.B. 2425 includes a private or independent institution of higher education among those institutions of higher education whose students are eligible to participate in the scholarship program established by the coordinating board for students pursuing a degree in engineering.

H.B. 2425 requires the coordinating board to adopt rules for the administration of these provisions as soon as practicable after the bill takes effect. The bill authorizes the coordinating board, for that purpose, to adopt the rules in the manner provided by law for emergency rules. The bill makes its provisions applicable beginning with the 2009-2010 academic year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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