

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.H.B. 4476
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Higher Education
5/6/2009
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In 2005, the legislature modified the Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) program to make some of its requirements mirror those of the TEXAS Grant program. In that process, a drafting error created two inconsistencies between the programs. The first error imposed a higher course load on TEG recipients than TEXAS Grant recipients. The second error required TEG recipients to maintain 24 hours and a 2.5 GPA by the end of their first year instead of the second year, as in the TEXAS Grant program.

C.S.H.B. 4476 amends current law relating to eligibility requirements for the TEG program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is modified in SECTION 1 (Section 61.2251, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 61.2251(b), (c), and (e), Education Code, as added by Chapter 1230 (H.B. 1172), Acts of the 79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005, as follows:

(b) Requires a person, to be eligible for a tuition equalization grant in the first academic year in which the person receives the grant, to meet certain requirements, including that the person be enrolled in at least three-fourths of a full course load conforming to an individual degree plan in an approved college or university, and make satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate as determined by the institution at which the person is enrolled. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(c) Authorizes a person, after qualifying for a tuition equalization grant under Subsection (b), to receive a tuition equalization grant in a subsequent academic year in which the person is enrolled at an approved institution only if the person completed at least 24 semester credit hours in the person's most recent full academic year, if the person is enrolled in an undergraduate degree or certificate program, or 18 semester hours in the person's most recent full academic year, if the person is enrolled in a graduate or professional degree program.

(e) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt rules to allow a person who is otherwise eligible to receive a tuition equalization grant to, in the event of a hardship or for other good cause shown, receive a tuition equalization grant if the person does not make satisfactory academic progress as required under Subsection (b)(6) (relating to requiring a person, to be eligible for a tuition equalization grant in the first academic year in which the person receives the grant, to make satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate as determined by the institution at which the person is enrolled). Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. (a) Provides that the changes in law made by this Act to Section 61.2251, Education Code, apply beginning with tuition equalization grants awarded for the 2009-2010 academic year. Requires that for that purpose a person's eligibility for a grant under Section 61.2251(c), Education Code, as amended by this Act, for the 2009-2010 academic year be based on the person's satisfaction of the requirements of Section 61.2251(c), as amended, in the 2008-2009 academic year, without regard to whether the person satisfied the former requirements of

Section 61.2251(c) or received a grant under Subchapter F, Chapter 61, Education Code, in that academic year.

(b) Provides that a tuition equalization grant awarded for an academic year before the 2009-2010 academic year is covered by the law in effect when the grant was awarded, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.