

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.S.B. 44  
By: Zaffirini  
Higher Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Evidence shows that undergraduate research programs are effective at improving student retention and graduation rates, increasing students' likelihood of pursuing a doctoral degree, and increasing interest in careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. By setting aside advanced research program funds for undergraduates, the pool of potential graduate students will grow while providing enriching research experiences.

C.S.S.B. 44 requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board guidelines and procedures for the advanced research program to require that a portion of the program's funds be used to support basic research by undergraduate students and certain graduate students.

### **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.S.B. 44 amends the Education Code to expand the advanced research program to include the encouragement and support of basic research in the specified fields conducted by university students as well as by faculty members. The bill requires guidelines and procedures developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the advanced research program to require that, as a condition of receiving an award for a project under the program, an eligible institution must use a portion of the award to support, in connection with the project for which the award is made, basic research conducted by graduate or undergraduate students if the institution is a medical and dental unit or by undergraduate students if the institution is any other institution of higher education. The bill defines "eligible institution" to mean an institution of higher education and defines "institution of higher education" and "medical and dental unit" by reference.

### **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.S.B. 44 differs from the original by specifying that, under guidelines and procedures developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and as a condition of receiving an award under the advanced research program, an eligible institution must use a portion of the award to support basic research conducted by graduate or undergraduate students if the institution is a medical and dental unit or by undergraduate students if the institution is any other institution of higher education, whereas the original requires that a portion of the award be used to support basic research conducted by undergraduate students. The substitute adds a provision not in the original defining "eligible institution," "institution of higher education," and "medical

and dental unit."