

By: Dutton

H.B. No. 929

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to rebates of tuition paid by certain freshman students who maintain satisfactory grades at public institutions of higher education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 54, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 54.0061 to read as follows:

Sec. 54.0061. TEXAS FIRST SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: TUITION REBATES FOR RESIDENT FRESHMAN STUDENTS MAINTAINING SATISFACTORY GRADES. (a) In this section, "coordinating board" means the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

(b) A student who enrolls as a first-time freshman at an institution of higher education and who completes the first two semesters or summer terms for which the student is enrolled at an institution of higher education is entitled to a rebate of the tuition paid by the student under this chapter for those semesters or terms if the student:

(1) graduated from:

(A) a public high school in this state;

(B) a private high school in this state, including a home school; or

(C) a high school operated by the United States Department of Defense;

(2) is a resident of this state for purposes of this

1 title or is entitled under Section 54.058 to pay tuition at the rate
2 charged to residents of this state;

3 (3) in each of those semesters or terms completes a
4 full course load for a student in an undergraduate degree or
5 certificate program;

6 (4) earns a cumulative grade point average of at least
7 2.0 on a four-point scale or the equivalent for all courses
8 attempted during those semesters or terms; and

9 (5) meets other eligibility requirements, including
10 financial need requirements, that are established by coordinating
11 board rule and are substantially similar to the eligibility
12 requirements for receiving a federal Pell grant.

13 (c) To receive a rebate under Subsection (b), not later than
14 the first anniversary of the last class day of the second semester
15 or term for which the rebate is sought, the student must apply to
16 the institution of higher education to which the student paid the
17 tuition, in the manner required by the institution. A student who
18 attended different institutions for each of those semesters or
19 terms must apply separately to each institution.

20 (d) An institution of higher education shall pay costs of
21 rebates under this section using appropriated money available for
22 the purpose. For the purposes of this section, the institution also
23 may solicit, receive, and spend grants, gifts, and donations from
24 any public or private source.

25 (e) The coordinating board shall adopt rules as necessary to
26 implement this section, including rules establishing:

27 (1) the requirements for completing a full course load

1 for purposes of Subsection (b)(3); and
2 (2) additional eligibility requirements in accordance
3 with Subsection (b)(5).

4 SECTION 2. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
5 may adopt initial rules under Section 54.0061, Education Code, as
6 added by this Act, in the manner provided by law for emergency
7 rules.

8 SECTION 3. Section 54.0061, Education Code, as added by
9 this Act, does not apply to a student who first enrolled in an
10 institution of higher education before the 2009 fall semester.

11 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
12 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
13 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
14 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
15 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.