

By: West

S.B. No. 956

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of a law school in the city of Dallas by the University of North Texas System.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter J, Chapter 105, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 105.502 to read as follows:

Sec. 105.502. UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS SYSTEM SCHOOL OF LAW. (a) The board may establish and operate a school of law in the city of Dallas as a professional school of the University of North Texas System.

(b) In administering the law school, the board may prescribe courses leading to customary degrees offered at other leading American schools of law and may award those degrees.

(c) Until the University of North Texas at Dallas has been administered as a general academic teaching institution for five years, the board shall administer the law school as a professional school of the system. After that period, the law school shall become a professional school of the University of North Texas at Dallas. Until the law school becomes a professional school of the University of North Texas at Dallas, the law school is entitled to formula funding as if the law school were a professional school of a general academic teaching institution.

(d) Before the board establishes a law school under this section, but not later than June 1, 2010, the Texas Higher Education

1 Coordinating Board shall prepare a feasibility study to determine  
2 the actions the system must take to obtain accreditation of the law  
3 school. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall  
4 deliver a copy of the study to the chair of each legislative  
5 standing committee or subcommittee with jurisdiction over higher  
6 education.

7 SECTION 2. Subchapter B, Chapter 55, Education Code, is  
8 amended by adding Section 55.1775 to read as follows:

9 Sec. 55.1775. UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS SYSTEM; ADDITIONAL  
10 BONDS. (a) In addition to the other authority granted by this  
11 subchapter, the board of regents of the University of North Texas  
12 System may acquire, purchase, construct, improve, renovate,  
13 enlarge, or equip property, buildings, structures, or other  
14 facilities, including roads and related infrastructure, for the law  
15 school established in the city of Dallas by the University of North  
16 Texas System, to be financed by the issuance of bonds in accordance  
17 with this subchapter, including bonds issued in accordance with a  
18 systemwide revenue financing program and secured as provided by  
19 that program, in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$30  
20 million.

21 (b) The board of regents may pledge irrevocably to the  
22 payment of the bonds authorized by this section all or any part of  
23 the revenue funds of an institution, branch, or entity of the  
24 University of North Texas System, including student tuition  
25 charges. The amount of a pledge made under this subsection may not  
26 be reduced or abrogated while the bonds for which the pledge is  
27 made, or bonds issued to refund those bonds, are outstanding.

1        (c) If sufficient funds are not available to the board of  
2 regents to meet its obligations under this section, the board may  
3 transfer funds among institutions, branches, and entities of the  
4 University of North Texas System to ensure the most equitable and  
5 efficient allocation of available resources for each institution,  
6 branch, or entity to carry out its duties and purposes.

7        SECTION 3. Section 61.003(6), Education Code, is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9            (6) "Other agency of higher education" means The  
10 University of Texas System, System Administration; Texas Western  
11 University Museum; Texas A&M University System, Administrative and  
12 General Offices; Texas Agricultural Experiment Station; Texas  
13 Agricultural Extension Service; Rodent and Predatory Animal  
14 Control Service (a part of the Texas Agricultural Extension  
15 Service); Texas Engineering Experiment Station (including the  
16 Texas Transportation Institute); Texas Engineering Extension  
17 Service; Texas Forest Service; Texas Tech University Museum; Texas  
18 State University System, System Administration; Sam Houston  
19 Memorial Museum; Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum; Cotton  
20 Research Committee of Texas; Water Resources Institute of Texas;  
21 Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory; the University of  
22 North Texas School of Law; and any other unit, division,  
23 institution, or agency which shall be so designated by statute or  
24 which may be established to operate as a component part of any  
25 public senior college or university, or which may be so classified  
26 as provided in this chapter.

27        SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives

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1 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
2 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
3 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
4 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.