

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 1250

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to the administration of certain programs to assist
3 certain foster children in obtaining postsecondary education and
4 training.

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

6 SECTION 1. (a) In this section:

7 (1) "Department" means the Department of Family and
8 Protective Services.

9 (2) "Program" means the education training and voucher
10 program component of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence
11 Program (42 U.S.C. Section 677).

12 (b) The department shall undertake a comprehensive review
13 of the program as provided by this section.

14 (c) The department shall develop a program improvement plan
15 to streamline and improve the administration of the program by:

16 (1) simplifying the application for participation in
17 the program by requiring:

18 (A) proof of enrollment at an institution;

19 (B) a mid-semester attendance verification; and

20 (C) only those additional criteria that are
21 essential to the proper expenditure of funds under the program;

22 (2) ensuring that program funds are made available to
23 students before the start of each term, quarter, or semester for
24 which the funds are needed so that the students are able to use the

1 funds to secure housing and purchase textbooks;

2 (3) improving support for students eligible for
3 program benefits who are struggling financially or academically;
4 and

5 (4) providing comprehensive transition planning for:

6 (A) extended school holidays; or

7 (B) life after higher education is completed.

8 (d) In developing the program improvement plan, the
9 department shall solicit the input of students, the Texas Education
10 Agency, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, community
11 colleges, the statewide Youth Leadership Council, and other
12 interested persons.

13 (e) The department shall consider contracting with an
14 outside contractor to assist the department in streamlining the
15 administration of the program.

16 (f) Not later than December 1, 2010, the department shall
17 prepare a report to the legislature regarding the implementation
18 and success of the program. The report must include the following
19 information for the two preceding fiscal years:

20 (1) an analysis of program costs, including:

21 (A) the amounts appropriated to the department
22 for the program;

23 (B) the costs of administering and overseeing the
24 program;

25 (C) the total amount of program funds disbursed
26 to students;

27 (D) the average amount of program funds disbursed

1 per student;

2 (E) the amount of lapsed funds, if any; and

3 (F) the estimated amount of financial need for
4 the average student participating in the program not covered by
5 program funds; and

6 (2) student data, including:

7 (A) the number of students eligible for the
8 program;

9 (B) the number of students who received program
10 funds;

11 (C) the percentage of students receiving program
12 funds who made satisfactory grades each semester; and

13 (D) the number of students each year who:

14 (i) reapplied for program funding; and

15 (ii) graduated from an institution of
16 higher education.

17 (g) The department, with assistance from the Texas Higher
18 Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Workforce Commission,
19 shall develop a method to track the outcomes of former foster youth
20 who participate in the program, including an analysis of the number
21 of students who received program funds who enter the workforce
22 after graduation in the field for which they were educated.

23 SECTION 2. This Act expires September 1, 2011.

24 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
25 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
26 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
27 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

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1 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.