

1-1 By: Watson S.B. No. 1764
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 11, 2009; March 20, 2009, read
1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Higher Education;
1-4 April 29, 2009, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 5,
1-5 Nays 0; April 29, 2009, sent to printer.)

1-6 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-7 AN ACT

1-8 relating to the dissemination of information regarding the cost of
1-9 attending public and private institutions of higher education and
1-10 regarding the availability of financial aid to assist in paying
1-11 that cost.

1-12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-13 SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
1-14 amended by adding Section 61.0777 to read as follows:

1-15 Sec. 61.0777. UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR PUBLICATION OF COST OF
1-16 ATTENDANCE INFORMATION. (a) The board shall prescribe uniform
1-17 standards intended to ensure that information regarding the cost of
1-18 attendance at institutions of higher education and at private or
1-19 independent institutions of higher education approved under
1-20 Subchapter F to receive tuition equalization grant funds is
1-21 available to the public in a manner that is consumer-friendly and
1-22 readily understandable to prospective students and their families.
1-23 In developing the standards, the board shall examine common and
1-24 recommended practices regarding the publication of such
1-25 information and shall solicit recommendations and comments from
1-26 institutions of higher education and affected private or
1-27 independent institutions of higher education.

1-28 (b) The uniform standards must:

1-29 (1) address all of the elements that constitute the
1-30 total cost of attendance, including tuition and fees, room and
1-31 board costs, book and supply costs, transportation costs, and other
1-32 personal expenses; and

1-33 (2) prescribe model language to be used to describe
1-34 each element of the cost of attendance.

1-35 (c) Each institution of higher education and each private or
1-36 independent institution of higher education approved under
1-37 Subchapter F to receive tuition equalization grant funds that
1-38 offers an undergraduate degree or certificate program shall:

1-39 (1) prominently display on the institution's Internet
1-40 website in accordance with the uniform standards prescribed under
1-41 this section information regarding the cost of attendance at the
1-42 institution by a full-time entering first-year student; and

1-43 (2) conform to the uniform standards in any electronic
1-44 or printed materials intended to provide to prospective
1-45 undergraduate students information regarding the cost of
1-46 attendance at the institution.

1-47 (d) Institutions described by Subsection (c) shall consider
1-48 the uniform standards prescribed under this section when providing
1-49 information to the public or to prospective students regarding the
1-50 cost of attendance at the institution by nonresident students,
1-51 graduate students, or students enrolled in professional programs.

1-52 (e) The board shall prescribe requirements for an
1-53 institution described by Subsection (c) to provide on the
1-54 institution's Internet website consumer-friendly and readily
1-55 understandable information regarding student financial aid
1-56 opportunities. The required information must be provided in
1-57 connection with the information displayed under Subsection (c)(1)
1-58 and must include a link to the primary federal student financial aid
1-59 Internet website intended to assist persons applying for student
1-60 financial aid.

1-61 (f) The board shall provide on the board's Internet website
1-62 a program or similar tool that will compute for a person accessing
1-63 the website the estimated net cost of attendance for a full-time
1-64 entering first-year student attending an institution described by

2-1 Subsection (c). The board shall require each of those institutions
2-2 to provide the board with the information the board requires to
2-3 administer this subsection.

2-4 (g) The board shall prescribe the initial standards and
2-5 requirements under this section not later than January 1, 2010.
2-6 Institutions of higher education shall comply with the standards
2-7 and requirements not later than April 1, 2010. This subsection
2-8 expires January 1, 2011.

2-9 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
2-10 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
2-11 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
2-12 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
2-13 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

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