

By: Hochberg

H.B. No. 3708

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the Early High School Graduation Scholarship program and to the funding of certain exemptions from tuition and fees at public institutions of higher education from savings attributable to the program.

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

SECTION 1. Section 54.213(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) ~~[Savings to the foundation school fund that occur as a result of the Early High School Graduation Scholarship program created in Subchapter K, Chapter 56, and that are not required for the funding of state credits for tuition and mandatory fees under Section 56.204 or school district credits under Section 56.2075 shall be used first to provide tuition exemptions under Section 54.212. Any of those savings remaining after providing tuition exemptions under Section 54.212 shall be used to provide tuition exemptions under Section 54.214.]~~ The Texas Education Agency shall

~~[also]~~ accept and make available to provide tuition exemptions under Section 54.214 gifts, grants, and donations made to the agency for that purpose. The commissioner of education shall

transfer those funds to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to distribute to institutions of higher education that provide exemptions under that section. ~~[Payment of funds under~~

~~this subsection shall be made in the manner provided by Section~~

~~56.207 for state credits under Subchapter K, Chapter 56.]~~

SECTION 2. Section 56.204, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:

(a) In a total amount not to exceed the amount of funds appropriated for the current state fiscal year to pay for ~~[An eligible person under the Early High School Graduation Scholarship program is entitled to]~~ a state credit to apply toward tuition or tuition and mandatory fees, as applicable, at a public or private institution of higher education in this state, the commissioner of education shall award to eligible persons credits in the following amounts:

(1) \$2,000 to apply toward tuition and mandatory fees if the person successfully completed the recommended or advanced high school program established under Section 28.025 and graduated from high school on or after September 1, 2005, in 36 consecutive months or less and an additional \$1,000 to apply toward tuition and mandatory fees if the person graduated with at least 15 hours of college credit;

(2) \$500 to apply toward tuition and mandatory fees if the person successfully completed the recommended or advanced high school program established under Section 28.025 and graduated from high school on or after September 1, 2005, in more than 36 consecutive months but not more than 41 consecutive months and an additional \$1,000 to apply toward tuition and mandatory fees if the person graduated with at least 30 hours of college credit;

(3) \$1,000 to apply toward tuition and mandatory fees

1 if the person successfully completed the recommended or advanced
2 high school program established under Section 28.025 and graduated
3 from high school on or after September 1, 2005, in more than 41
4 consecutive months but not more than 45 consecutive months with at
5 least 30 hours of college credit; or

6 (4) \$1,000 to apply only toward tuition if the person
7 graduated before September 1, 2005, after successfully completing
8 the requirements for a high school diploma in not more than 36
9 consecutive months.

10 (a-1) The commissioner of education by rule shall establish
11 the procedure to allocate awards under this section in the event
12 that the amount of funds appropriated in a state fiscal year for the
13 Early High School Graduation Scholarship program is insufficient to
14 allow the commissioner to award credits to all students eligible to
15 be awarded a state credit in that fiscal year.

16 SECTION 3. Section 56.207(b), Education Code, is amended to
17 read as follows:

18 (b) On receipt of a report from the coordinating board under
19 Subsection (a), the commissioner of education shall transfer to the
20 coordinating board, from funds appropriated for the purpose of the
21 Early High [Foundation] School Graduation Scholarship program
22 [Program], an amount sufficient to pay each eligible institution of
23 higher education the amount of state credit for tuition or tuition
24 and mandatory fees, as applicable, that is applied by the
25 institution during the period covered by the report.

26 SECTION 4. Sections 56.202(b) and 56.208, Education Code,
27 are repealed.

1 SECTION 5. As soon as practicable after this Act takes
2 effect, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall revise
3 rules adopted under Section 56.209(a), Education Code, as necessary
4 to conform to changes made by this Act to Subchapter K, Chapter 56,
5 Education Code. For that purpose, the coordinating board may adopt
6 the revisions to those rules in the manner provided by law for
7 emergency rules. This section expires September 1, 2012.

8 SECTION 6. The changes in law made by this Act apply
9 beginning with the 2011-2012 academic year, but do not affect any
10 state credit awarded under Subchapter K, Chapter 56, Education
11 Code, before the effective date of this Act.

12 SECTION 7. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
14 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2011.