

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 1724

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to conditions on the receipt of tuition and fee exemptions at public institutions of higher education.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 54, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 54.2001 to read as follows:

Sec. 54.2001. CONTINUED RECEIPT OF EXEMPTIONS CONDITIONAL.

(a) Notwithstanding any other law but subject to Subsection (d), after initially qualifying under this subchapter for a mandatory or discretionary exemption from the payment of tuition or other fees for enrollment during a semester or term at an institution of higher education, a person may continue to receive the exemption for a subsequent semester or term only if the person:

(1) makes satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or a certificate as determined by the institution in accordance with the institution's policy regarding eligibility for financial aid; and

(2) as of the beginning of the semester or term, has not completed more than six semester credit hours in excess of the minimum number of semester credit hours required to complete the person's degree or certificate program.

(b) For purposes of Subsection (a)(2), the computation of a person's total number of completed semester credit hours includes transfer credit hours that count toward the person's degree or

1 certificate program course requirements, but excludes:

2 (1) hours earned exclusively by examination;

3 (2) hours earned for a course for which the person
4 received credit toward the person's high school academic
5 requirements; and

6 (3) hours earned for developmental coursework that an
7 institution of higher education required the person to take under
8 Section 51.3062 or under the former provisions of Section 51.306.

9 (c) If on the completion of any semester or term a person
10 fails to meet any requirement of Subsection (a), the person may not
11 receive an exemption from the payment of tuition or other fees
12 described by Subsection (a) for the next semester or term in which
13 the person enrolls. A person may become eligible to receive an
14 exemption in a subsequent semester or term if the person:

15 (1) completes a semester or term during which the
16 person is not eligible for an exemption; and

17 (2) meets each requirement of Subsection (a).

18 (d) If a requirement imposed by this section for the
19 continued receipt of a specific exemption conflicts with another
20 requirement imposed by statute for that exemption, the stricter
21 requirement prevails.

22 (e) This section does not apply to the exemption provided by
23 Section 54.216 or to any other exemption provided to a high school
24 student for enrollment in a dual credit course or other course for
25 which the student may earn joint high school and college credit.

26 SECTION 2. The change in law made by this Act applies to
27 eligibility for an exemption from the payment of tuition or other

1 fees beginning with tuition and fees charged for the 2012 spring
2 semester.

3 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
4 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
5 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
6 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
7 Act takes effect September 1, 2011.