

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD**  
**Austin, Texas**

**FISCAL NOTE, 82ND LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**May 10, 2011**

**TO:** Honorable Judith Zaffirini, Chair, Senate Committee on Higher Education

**FROM:** John S O'Brien, Director, Legislative Budget Board

**IN RE: HB1163** by Keffer (Relating to tuition and fee exemptions at public institutions of higher education for certain peace officers and firefighters.), **As Engrossed**

<b>No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.</b>
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The bill reenacts Section 54.208 of the Education Code to create tuition and fee exemptions for firefighters enrolled as students in courses as part of a fire science curriculum. Exemptions provided in this section do not apply to deposits that may be required in the nature of security for the return or proper care of property loaned for the use of the students.

The bill also adds Section 54.2081 to the Education Code to exempt peace officers from paying tuition and laboratory fees for undergraduate criminal justice or law enforcement courses. A student may not receive this exemption if the student has already exceeded the allowable semester credit hours attempted for a program while classified as a resident undergraduate, regardless of institution(s) at which the hours were attempted. A student may not receive this exemption for a specific class if the number of students eligible for this exemption exceed 20% of the students in the class. Exemptions provided in this section do not apply to deposits that may be required in the nature of security for the return or proper care of property loaned for the use of the students.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board would be required to adopt rules governing this section and a uniform listing of degree programs covered by the exemption under this section. If the legislature does not specifically provide funds to cover an institution's cost in providing these exemptions, the institution shall provide a report to the legislature detailing the cost for each unfunded semester. The changes in law made by the bill apply to an exemption from tuition and fees beginning with the 2011 fall semester.

Based on responses from institutions of higher education, the tuition losses would not be significant.

**Local Government Impact**

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

**Source Agencies:** 710 Texas A&M University System Administrative and General Offices, 720 The University of Texas System Administration, 758 Texas State University System, 768 Texas Tech University System Administration, 769 University of North Texas System Administration, 781 Higher Education Coordinating Board, 783 University of Houston System Administration

**LBB Staff:** JOB, KK, RT, GO