

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to requiring general academic teaching institutions to offer a fixed tuition rate plan to undergraduate students.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 54, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 54.017 to read as follows:

Sec. 54.017. FIXED TUITION RATE OPTION FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT GENERAL ACADEMIC TEACHING INSTITUTIONS. (a) In this section:

(1) "Coordinating board" means the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

(2) "General academic teaching institution" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter and except as otherwise provided by this section, the governing board of a general academic teaching institution shall offer each entering undergraduate student, including each undergraduate student who transfers to the institution regardless of the number of semester credit hours transferred by the student, the opportunity to participate in a fixed tuition rate plan.

(c) A fixed tuition rate plan offered under this section must provide that:

(1) during the 48 months immediately following the date of a student's initial enrollment at the general academic

1 teaching institution, the institution may not charge tuition to the
2 student for a semester or other academic term at a rate that exceeds
3 the rate the institution would have charged the student for the same
4 courses during:

5 (A) the first academic year in which the student
6 enrolled at the institution, if the student initially enrolled for
7 a fall or spring semester; or

8 (B) the academic year immediately following the
9 summer term in which the student enrolled at the institution, if the
10 student initially enrolled for a summer term; and

11 (2) after the fourth anniversary of the date the
12 student first enrolls at the institution, regardless of whether the
13 student is continuously enrolled in the institution after that
14 initial enrollment, the institution may not charge tuition to the
15 student for a semester or other academic term at a rate that exceeds
16 the rate the institution would have charged the student under
17 Subdivision (1) had the student initially enrolled in the
18 institution one year after the student's actual initial enrollment.

19 (d) A fixed tuition rate charged to a student by a general
20 academic teaching institution under Subsection (c) does not apply
21 to the student after the student has been awarded a baccalaureate
22 degree by the institution. A student who previously completed a
23 baccalaureate degree program at the institution is considered to be
24 an entering undergraduate student for purposes of this section if
25 the student subsequently enrolls in another undergraduate degree
26 program at the institution.

27 (e) Each general academic teaching institution shall notify

1 each entering undergraduate student, including each undergraduate
2 student who transfers to the institution, of the fixed tuition rate
3 plan offered under this section.

4 (f) In consultation with the general academic teaching
5 institutions, the coordinating board shall adopt any rules the
6 coordinating board considers appropriate for the administration of
7 this section.

8 (g) This section does not require a general academic
9 teaching institution to offer an alternative tuition plan to
10 undergraduate students enrolled in the institution.

11 (h) This section does not apply to the tuition charged by a
12 general academic teaching institution to a student who enters the
13 institution for the first time before the 2013 fall semester. This
14 subsection expires January 1, 2020.

15 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
16 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
17 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
18 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
19 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.