

By: Martinez

H.B. No. 363

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to the establishment of a public law school in the Rio  
3 Grande Valley.

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

5 SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is  
6 amended by adding Section 61.0907 to read as follows:

7 Sec. 61.0907. RIO GRANDE VALLEY SCHOOL OF LAW. (a) The  
8 governing board of a university system may establish and operate,  
9 as a professional school of the system, a school of law in Cameron  
10 County or Hidalgo County as the governing board considers  
11 appropriate.

12 (b) In administering the law school, the governing board may  
13 prescribe courses leading to customary degrees offered at other  
14 leading American schools of law and may award those degrees.

15 (c) The governing board may assign responsibility for the  
16 management of the law school to a general academic teaching  
17 institution in the university system.

18 (d) The governing board may accept and administer gifts and  
19 grants from any public or private person or entity for the use and  
20 benefit of the law school. Notwithstanding any other provision of  
21 this section, establishment of a law school is subject to the  
22 availability of funding, either through appropriation or from  
23 another source.

24 (e) The governing board of a university system that intends

1 to establish a law school under this section shall notify the  
2 coordinating board. If the coordinating board receives  
3 notification under this subsection from more than one governing  
4 board, the coordinating board shall, based on the need for a law  
5 school in a geographic area, potential student demand, available  
6 system resources, the feasibility of the specific proposal of each  
7 system, and other appropriate criteria, determine which of those  
8 governing boards may establish a law school under this section.

9 (f) Before the governing board establishes a law school  
10 under this section, the governing board shall request the  
11 coordinating board to prepare a feasibility study to determine the  
12 actions the system must take to obtain accreditation of the law  
13 school. The coordinating board shall deliver a copy of the study to  
14 the governing board and to the chair of each legislative standing  
15 committee with jurisdiction over higher education.

16 SECTION 2. No funds for a state fiscal biennium ending on or  
17 before August 31, 2019, may be appropriated for the purposes of  
18 Section 61.0907, Education Code, as added by this Act.

19 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
20 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
21 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
22 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
23 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.