

By: Turner of Collin

H.B. No. 3497

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to state savings and government efficiency through a taxpayer savings grant program.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 42, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter J to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. TAXPAYER SAVINGS GRANTS

Sec. 42.501. TAXPAYER SAVINGS GRANT PROGRAM. (a) In this section:

(1) "Eligible student" means a school-age child who resides in the state and who:

(A) is entering kindergarten or first grade; or

(B) attended a public school for all of the academic year immediately preceding initial participation in the program, or is a prior participant in the program.

(b) A parent or legal guardian of an eligible student who agrees to accept reimbursement in an amount that is less than the state average maintenance and operations expenditures per student may receive reimbursement from the state for the tuition paid for the enrollment of the eligible student at a private school in an amount that is the lesser of:

(1) the tuition paid; or

(2) 60 percent of the state average maintenance and operations expenditures per student.

1 (c) Money from the available school fund and federal funds
2 may not be used for reimbursement under this section.

3 (d) Private schools that parents voluntarily choose to
4 attend, with or without governmental assistance, will not be
5 required to comply with any state law or regulation governing its
6 educational program that was not in effect on January 1, 2013."

7 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable, but not later than the
8 45th day after the effective date of this Act, the comptroller, in
9 coordination with the commissioner of education, shall adopt rules
10 to implement the Taxpayer Savings Grant Program under Section
11 42.501, Education Code, as added by this Act, including rules to
12 prevent fraud in financial transactions under the program and to
13 determine the net savings resulting from implementation of the
14 program. Such regulations shall reconcile payments to all schools
15 within the same fiscal year, or one month after.

16 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013, if it
17 receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each
18 house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution.
19 If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for effect on that
20 date, this Act takes effect on the 91st day after the last day of the
21 legislation session.