

1-1 By: Seliger, Zaffirini S.B. No. 497  
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed February 11, 2013; February 13, 2013,  
 1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on Higher Education;  
 1-4 March 11, 2013, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 6,  
 1-5 Nays 0; March 11, 2013, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7 Seliger	X			
1-8 Watson	X			
1-9 Birdwell	X			
1-10 Duncan	X			
1-11 Patrick	X			
1-12 West			X	
1-13 Zaffirini	X			

1-15 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
 1-16 AN ACT

1-17 relating to the number of semester credit hours required to earn an  
 1-18 associate degree at public institutions of higher education.

1-19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-20 SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is  
 1-21 amended by adding Section 61.05151 to read as follows:

1-22 Sec. 61.05151. SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED FOR ASSOCIATE  
 1-23 DEGREE. (a) To earn an associate degree, a student may not be  
 1-24 required by an institution of higher education to complete more  
 1-25 than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the  
 1-26 degree by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its  
 1-27 successor unless the institution determines that there is a  
 1-28 compelling academic reason for requiring completion of additional  
 1-29 semester credit hours for the degree.

1-30 (b) The board may review one or more of an institution's  
 1-31 associate degree programs to ensure compliance with this section.

1-32 (c) Subsection (a) does not apply to an associate degree  
 1-33 awarded by an institution to a student enrolled in the institution  
 1-34 before the 2015 fall semester. This subsection does not prohibit  
 1-35 the institution from reducing the number of semester credit hours  
 1-36 the student must complete to receive the degree.

1-37 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
 1-38 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
 1-39 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
 1-40 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
 1-41 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

1-42 \* \* \* \* \*