

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 1668

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the institutions of higher education eligible to participate in the Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (T-STEM) Challenge Scholarship Program.

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

SECTION 1. Section 61.9792, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 61.9792. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM. The board shall establish and administer, in accordance with this subchapter and board rules, the Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (T-STEM) Challenge Scholarship program under which the board provides a grant to an eligible institution for the purpose of providing a scholarship to a student who meets the eligibility criteria prescribed by Section 61.9793.

SECTION 2. Section 61.9794, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 61.9794. ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION. (a) To qualify as an eligible institution under this subchapter, an institution must:

(1) be one of the following:

(A) a public junior college, public junior college district, or public technical institute that admits ~~+~~

~~[(2) — admit]~~ at least 50 eligible students into a STEM program each academic year; or

(B) a general academic teaching institution that

1 admits into a STEM program each academic year eligible students
2 who:

3 (i) previously participated in a STEM
4 program at a public junior college or public technical institute;
5 and

6 (ii) completed at least 45 semester credit
7 hours at the college or institute before enrolling in the general
8 academic teaching institution; and

9 (2) [(3)] develop partnerships with business and
10 industry to:

11 (A) identify local employment needs in Science,
12 Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields; and

13 (B) provide part-time employment for students
14 enrolled in a STEM program.

15 (b) To maintain eligibility, beginning with the second year
16 following implementation of a scholarship program under this
17 subchapter, an institution must demonstrate to the board that at
18 least 70 percent of the institution's STEM program [~~T-STEM~~
19 ~~Challenge-Scholarship~~] graduates, within three months after
20 graduation, are:

21 (1) employed by a business in a Science, Technology,
22 Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) field; or

23 (2) for STEM program graduates from a two-year
24 institution, enrolled in upper-division courses leading to a
25 baccalaureate degree in a Science, Technology, Engineering, and
26 Mathematics (STEM) field.

27 SECTION 3. Section 61.9795, Education Code, is amended as

1 follows:

2 Sec. 61.9795. AMOUNT; FUNDING. (a) Subject to available
3 funding, the board shall award a grant to an eligible institution
4 for the purpose of providing scholarships, with at least
5 50 percent of the amount awarded from private funds.

6 (b) Except as provided by Subsection (b-1), an ~~[An]~~ eligible
7 student may receive a scholarship awarded under this subchapter for
8 not more than two academic years.

9 **(b-1) An eligible student who enrolls in a STEM program at a**
10 **general academic teaching institution under this subchapter may**
11 **receive a scholarship awarded under this subchapter for two**
12 **additional academic years.**

13 (c) The board may use any available revenue, including
14 legislative appropriations, and may solicit and accept gifts and
15 grants for purposes of this subchapter.

16 SECTION 4. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
17 shall award scholarships under Subchapter GG, Chapter 61, Education
18 Code, as amended by this Act, beginning with the 2013-2014 academic
19 year. The coordinating board shall adopt the rules required by that
20 subchapter as soon as practicable after this Act takes effect.

21 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013.