

By: Miller of Fort Bend

H.R. No. 3239

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Since World War I, Texas has supported veterans by  
2 providing educational benefits to ease the transition to civilian  
3 life; and

4           WHEREAS, Under the Hazlewood Act of 1919, the state exempts  
5 veterans from paying tuition and mandatory fees at public  
6 institutions of higher education; the legislature in 2009 began  
7 permitting veterans to give their children up to 150 semester hours  
8 of their own unused Hazlewood benefits, and today, two-thirds of  
9 all Hazlewood benefits are paid to the children of veterans; and

10           WHEREAS, Since 2009, the cost of Hazlewood benefits to  
11 universities and community colleges has skyrocketed, rising from  
12 nearly \$25 million to more than \$169 million in 2014; the program,  
13 as currently configured, is projected to cost more than \$286  
14 million by 2017; moreover, a recent federal court ruling on the  
15 program's residency requirements, now under appeal, potentially  
16 opens the program to veterans and their children from across the  
17 entire country; the Texas Veterans Commission estimates that the  
18 cost could exceed \$2 billion under that scenario; and

19           WHEREAS, The Lone Star State is committed to supporting the  
20 men and women who have served our country in the United States  
21 military, but the rising costs of Hazlewood Act benefits are a  
22 source of deep concern; now, therefore, be it

23           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas  
24 Legislature hereby request the speaker of the house to create a

1 select interim committee to examine the Hazlewood Act program; and,  
2 be it further

3       RESOLVED, That the committee examine the evolution of the  
4 program from its inception, as well as the associated current costs  
5 for both veterans and their children to institutions of higher  
6 education; and, be it further

7       RESOLVED, That the committee be made up of 11 members of the  
8 house and that it submit a full report, including findings and  
9 recommendations for legislation, to the House of Representatives of  
10 the 85th Texas Legislature when it convenes in January 2017.