

By: Birdwell

S.B. No. 691

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to tuition and fee exemptions for certain students
3 enrolled in fire science courses at public institutions of higher
4 education.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section 54.353(a), Education Code, is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (a) The governing board of an institution of higher
9 education shall exempt from the payment of tuition and laboratory
10 fees any student enrolled in one or more courses offered as part of
11 a fire science curriculum who:

12 (1) is employed as a firefighter by a political
13 subdivision of this state; or

14 (2) is currently, and has been for at least one year,
15 an active member of an organized volunteer fire department
16 [~~participating in the Texas Emergency Services Retirement System or~~
17 ~~a retirement system established under the Texas Local Fire Fighters~~
18 ~~Retirement Act (Article 6243c, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes) and]~~
19 who [~~holds~~]:

20 (A) holds an Accredited Advanced level of
21 certification, or an equivalent successor certification, under the
22 State Firefighters' [~~Firemen's~~] and Fire Marshals' Association of
23 Texas volunteer certification program; [~~or~~]

24 (B) holds a Phase V (Firefighter II)

1 certification, or an equivalent successor certification, under the
2 Texas Commission on Fire Protection's voluntary certification
3 program under Section [419.071](#), Government Code; or

4 (C) participates in the Texas Emergency Services
5 Retirement System or a retirement system established under the
6 Texas Local Fire Fighters Retirement Act (Article [6243e](#), Vernon's
7 Texas Civil Statutes).

8 SECTION 2. Section [54.353](#)(a), Education Code, as amended by
9 this Act, applies beginning with tuition and laboratory fees
10 charged for the 2015 fall semester. Tuition and laboratory fees
11 charged for an academic period before that semester are covered by
12 the law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act,
13 and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

14 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
15 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
16 provided by Section [39](#), Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
17 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
18 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.