

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2285
By: Thompson, Ed
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties suggest that certain field laboratory operations administered by the University of Houston would benefit from a higher public profile. C.S.H.B. 2285 seeks to support these operations by establishing the Texas Institute for Coastal Prairie Research and Education at the University of Houston.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2285 amends the Education Code to establish the Texas Institute for Coastal Prairie Research and Education at the University of Houston and to vest the organization, control, and management of the institute in the board of regents of the University of Houston System. The bill requires the institute to conduct environmental research and education on coastal prairie and prairie restoration, to provide a setting for other entities to conduct environmental research and education on coastal prairie and prairie restoration, and to provide national leadership and education regarding the best methods to restore coastal prairie.

C.S.H.B. 2285 requires the University of Houston to encourage public or private entities to participate in or support the operation of the institute and authorizes the university to enter into an agreement with any public or private entity for that purpose. The bill authorizes such an agreement to allow the institute to provide information, services, or other assistance to an entity in exchange for the entity's participation or support. The bill authorizes the board to solicit, accept, and administer gifts and grants from any public or private source for the purposes of the institute and to employ personnel for the institute as necessary.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2017.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2285 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Chapter 111, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter J to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. TEXAS INSTITUTE FOR COASTAL PRAIRIE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Sec. 111.141. DEFINITIONS.

Sec. 111.142. ESTABLISHMENT.

Sec. 111.143. POWERS AND DUTIES.

The institute shall:

(1) conduct environmental research on coastal prairie and prairie restoration;

(2) provide a setting for other entities to conduct environmental research on coastal prairie and prairie restoration; and

(3) provide national leadership and education regarding the best methods to restore coastal prairie.

Sec. 111.144. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ENTITIES.

Sec. 111.145. GIFTS AND GRANTS.

Sec. 111.146. PERSONNEL.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2017.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Chapter 111, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter J to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. TEXAS INSTITUTE FOR COASTAL PRAIRIE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Sec. 111.141. DEFINITIONS.

Sec. 111.142. ESTABLISHMENT.

Sec. 111.143. POWERS AND DUTIES.

The institute shall:

(1) conduct environmental research and education on coastal prairie and prairie restoration;

(2) provide a setting for other entities to conduct environmental research and education on coastal prairie and prairie restoration; and

(3) provide national leadership and education regarding the best methods to restore coastal prairie.

Sec. 111.144. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ENTITIES.

Sec. 111.145. GIFTS AND GRANTS.

Sec. 111.146. PERSONNEL.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.