

By: Walle

H.B. No. 4251

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT

2 relating to an exemption from tuition and required fees at public
3 institutions of higher education for undergraduate students from
4 low-income families.

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

6 SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 54, Education Code, is
7 amended by adding Section 54.2003 to read as follows:

8 Sec. 54.2003. UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME
9 FAMILIES. (a) In this section:

10 (1) "Family income" means the combined gross income
11 for purposes of federal income tax of:

12 (A) the student and the student's parents, if the
13 student is not married; or

14 (B) the student, the student's parents, and the
15 student's spouse, if the student is married.

16 (2) "Federal poverty level" is determined according to
17 the federal poverty guidelines established by the United States
18 Department of Health and Human Services.

19 (3) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning
20 assigned by Section 61.003.

21 (b) For the 2021-2022 academic year and for each subsequent
22 academic year, an undergraduate student enrolled at an institution
23 of higher education is exempt from the payment of tuition and
24 required fees authorized by this chapter for a term or semester if

1 the student:

2 (1) on the day the semester or term begins:

3 (A) is less than 25 years of age; and

4 (B) is a resident of this state who has resided in
5 this state continuously for the preceding 12 months; and

6 (2) for the preceding calendar year, had a family
7 income of less than 400 percent of the applicable federal poverty
8 level.

9 (b-1) For the 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 academic
10 years, an undergraduate student enrolled at an institution of
11 higher education is exempt from the payment of tuition and required
12 fees authorized by this chapter for a term or semester if the
13 student:

14 (1) on the day the semester or term begins:

15 (A) is less than 25 years of age; and

16 (B) is a resident of this state who has resided in
17 this state continuously for the preceding 12 months; and

18 (2) for the preceding calendar year, had a family
19 income of less than 300 percent of the applicable federal poverty
20 level.

21 (b-2) Subsection (b-1) and this subsection expire September
22 1, 2021.

23 (c) A student may not receive an exemption under this
24 section for more than 12 semesters or summer terms.

25 (d) A student is not eligible for an exemption under this
26 section if the student's tuition and required fees for the semester
27 or term are or will be paid directly to the institution of higher

1 education by the United States or by a person other than the student
2 or the student's family or guardian from funds other than funds of
3 the student or the student's family or guardian.

4 (e) To receive an exemption under this section, a student
5 must apply for the exemption in the manner provided by the
6 institution in which the student registers. The governing board of
7 the institution shall require an applicant to submit satisfactory
8 evidence that the applicant is eligible for the exemption.

9 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with tuition and
10 required fees imposed for the 2018 fall semester.

11 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
12 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
13 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
14 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
15 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.