

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 809  
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Higher Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

It has been reported that while young adults who are homeless have the aptitude and the ambition to attend college, their homeless status may prevent them from achieving that goal. C.S.H.B. 809 seeks to address this issue by extending higher education liaison services that are currently required for students who were formerly in foster care to serve homeless students as well and by making certain provisions to optimize their access to university housing.

### **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. 809 amends the Education Code to require a public institution of higher education and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to designate at least one employee to act as a liaison officer for current and incoming students who are homeless. The bill specifies that an institution or the coordinating board, as applicable, may designate the same employee or employees to act as a liaison officer for students who were formerly in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and students who are homeless or may designate one or more different employees to act as liaison officer for each of those student populations separately. The bill provides for the meaning of "students who are homeless" by reference to federal law and includes in the term students who reside in a student housing facility maintained by an institution of higher education during an academic term but who are homeless between academic terms.

C.S.H.B. 809 clarifies that the duties of a liaison officer to the students for whom the officer is designated are the same duties previously prescribed by statute for a liaison officer serving students who were formerly in the conservatorship of DFPS. The bill specifies that the information regarding support services to be provided to the applicable students by a liaison officer at an institution of higher education includes information about financial aid, on-campus and off-campus housing, food and meal programs, and counseling services.

C.S.H.B. 809 makes a student who is homeless and meets other applicable criteria eligible to receive certain assistance from an institution of higher education in locating temporary housing between academic terms. The bill requires an institution of higher education that maintains student housing facilities to give priority in the assignment of housing in those facilities to students who are homeless.

## **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.

## **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 809 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute does not include the following:

- provisions requiring the coordinating board to adopt rules and establish policies and procedures regarding certain professional development for liaison officers;
- a provision requiring a liaison officer at a public institution of higher education to contact a certain federally designated officer as necessary to facilitate the transition of students from secondary to postsecondary education; and
- a deadline for the designation of the coordinating board's liaison officer.

The substitute includes provisions clarifying the number of, and division of responsibilities between, the required liaison officers.