

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1277
By: Perez
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been noted that students of the University of Houston-Downtown, which is a commuter campus, could benefit from additional communal space and that the student body has previously demonstrated support for the construction of a wellness and success center. H. B. 1277 seeks to provide for such a facility by authorizing the imposition of a student fee to be used for funding the center.

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

H.B. 1277 amends the Education Code to authorize the board of regents of the University of Houston System to charge each student enrolled at the University of Houston-Downtown a wellness and success center fee and restricts the use of the fee to the purposes of financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, improving, and equipping a wellness and success center and operating student wellness programs at the University of Houston-Downtown. The bill makes the charging of the fee contingent on approval by a majority vote of the students enrolled at the university participating in a general student election held for that purpose and caps the fee at \$150 per student for each regular semester, \$75 per student for each summer session of eight weeks or longer, and \$50 per student for each term of the summer session of less than eight weeks. The bill requires revenue from the fee to be deposited to the credit of an account known as the University of Houston-Downtown Wellness and Success Center Fee Account. The board of regents may increase the amount of the fee, except that an increase to an amount that exceeds by more than 10 percent the amount of the fee charged the preceding academic year is subject to approval by a majority vote of students enrolled at the university participating in a general student election held for that purpose. The wellness and success center fee is not considered in determining the maximum amount of student services fees authorized by statute.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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