

1-1 By: Leman, et al. (Senate Sponsor - Kolckhorst) H.B. No. 539  
 1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House April 4, 2019;  
 1-3 April 8, 2019, read first time and referred to Committee on Higher  
 1-4 Education; May 19, 2019, reported favorably by the following vote:  
 1-5 Yeas 9, Nays 0; May 19, 2019, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7				
1-8	X			
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12	X			
1-13	X			
1-14	X			
1-15	X			
1-16	X			

1-17 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
 1-18 AN ACT

1-19 relating to the automatic admission to general academic teaching  
 1-20 institutions and eligibility for certain scholarships of a student  
 1-21 who is the valedictorian of the student's high school graduating  
 1-22 class.

1-23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-24 SECTION 1. Section 51.803, Education Code, is amended by  
 1-25 adding Subsection (d-1) and amending Subsection (h) to read as  
 1-26 follows:

1-27 (d-1) In addition to admissions required under Subsection  
 1-28 (a), each general academic teaching institution shall admit an  
 1-29 applicant for admission to the institution as an undergraduate  
 1-30 student if the applicant graduated as the valedictorian of the  
 1-31 student's high school graduating class in one of the two school  
 1-32 years preceding the academic year for which the student is applying  
 1-33 for admission and satisfies the requirements of Subsections (a)(1)  
 1-34 through (3). Subsection (b) applies to an applicant for admission  
 1-35 under this subsection. An applicant admitted under this subsection  
 1-36 is considered automatically admitted for purposes of Subsection  
 1-37 (a), (a-1), or (a-2), as applicable.

1-38 (h) An institution that admits under this section an  
 1-39 applicant qualified for automatic admission under Subsection (a) or  
 1-40 (d-1) may admit the applicant for either the fall semester of the  
 1-41 academic year for which the applicant applies or for the summer  
 1-42 session preceding that fall semester, as determined by the  
 1-43 institution.

1-44 SECTION 2. Section 56.484, Education Code, is amended to  
 1-45 read as follows:

1-46 Sec. 56.484. INITIAL ELIGIBILITY FOR SCHOLARSHIP. To be  
 1-47 eligible for a scholarship under this subchapter, a student must:

1-48 (1) have graduated from a public or accredited private  
 1-49 high school in this state while ranked in the top 10 percent or as  
 1-50 the valedictorian of the student's graduating class, subject to  
 1-51 Section 56.487(b);

1-52 (2) have completed the recommended or advanced high  
 1-53 school curriculum established under Section 28.025 or its  
 1-54 equivalent;

1-55 (3) have applied for admission as a first-time  
 1-56 freshman student for the 2010-2011 academic year or a subsequent  
 1-57 academic year to an institution of higher education that has  
 1-58 elected to offer admissions for that academic year to applicants as  
 1-59 provided by Section 51.803(a-1);

1-60 (4) enroll as a first-time freshman student in an  
 1-61 institution of higher education not later than the 16th month after

2-1 the date of the student's high school graduation;  
2-2 (5) have been awarded a TEXAS grant under Subchapter M  
2-3 for the same semester or other academic term for which the  
2-4 scholarship will be awarded;

2-5 (6) be a Texas resident under Section 54.052; and

2-6 (7) comply with any other eligibility requirements  
2-7 established by coordinating board rule.

2-8 SECTION 3. The changes in law made by this Act to Section  
2-9 51.803, Education Code, apply beginning with admissions to a  
2-10 general academic teaching institution for the 2019-2020 academic  
2-11 year. Admissions to a general academic teaching institution for an  
2-12 academic year before that academic year are governed by the law in  
2-13 effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the  
2-14 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

2-15 SECTION 4. The change in law made by this Act to Section  
2-16 56.484, Education Code, applies beginning with scholarships  
2-17 awarded for the 2019-2020 academic year. Scholarships awarded for  
2-18 an academic year before that academic year are governed by the law  
2-19 in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the  
2-20 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

2-21 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
2-22 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
2-23 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
2-24 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
2-25 Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

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