

1-1 By: Watson S.B. No. 2231
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 8, 2019; March 21, 2019, read
 1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Higher Education;
 1-4 April 26, 2019, reported adversely, with favorable Committee
 1-5 Substitute by the following vote: Yeas 9, Nays 0; April 26, 2019,
 1-6 sent to printer.)

1-7 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-8				
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	X			

1-18 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 2231 By: Watson

1-19 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
 1-20 AN ACT

1-21 relating to the exemption of tuition and laboratory fees at public
 1-22 institutions of higher education for certain paramedics.

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

1-24 SECTION 1. The heading to Section 54.353, Education Code,
 1-25 is amended to read as follows:

1-26 Sec. 54.353. FIREFIGHTERS OR PARAMEDICS ENROLLED IN FIRE
 1-27 SCIENCE COURSES.

1-28 SECTION 2. Section 54.353, Education Code, is amended by
 1-29 amending Subsections (a) and (f) and adding Subsection (e-1) to
 1-30 read as follows:

1-31 (a) The governing board of an institution of higher
 1-32 education shall exempt from the payment of tuition and laboratory
 1-33 fees any student enrolled in one or more courses offered as part of
 1-34 a fire science curriculum who:

1-35 (1) is employed as a firefighter or a paramedic by a
 1-36 political subdivision of this state; or

1-37 (2) is currently, and has been for at least one year,
 1-38 an active member of an organized volunteer fire department
 1-39 participating in the Texas Emergency Services Retirement System or
 1-40 a retirement system established under the Texas Local Fire Fighters
 1-41 Retirement Act (Article 6243e, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes) and
 1-42 who holds:

1-43 (A) an Accredited Advanced level of
 1-44 certification, or an equivalent successor certification, under the
 1-45 State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas volunteer
 1-46 certification program; or

1-47 (B) Phase V (Firefighter II) certification, or an
 1-48 equivalent successor certification, under the Texas Commission on
 1-49 Fire Protection's voluntary certification program under Section
 1-50 419.071, Government Code.

1-51 (e-1) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the governing board
 1-52 of an institution of higher education may, in accordance with Texas
 1-53 Higher Education Coordinating Board rule, exclude from the
 1-54 exemption under this section a course that is offered through
 1-55 distance education.

1-56 (f) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall
 1-57 adopt:

1-58 (1) rules governing the granting or denial of an
 1-59 exemption under this section, including rules:

1-60 (A) prescribing the educational attainment or

2-1 level of certification necessary to qualify for an exemption as a
2-2 paramedic;

2-3 (B) relating to the determination of a student's
2-4 eligibility for an exemption; and

2-5 (C) relating to the exclusion from the exemption
2-6 under Subsection (e-1) of a distance education course, including
2-7 prescribing the maximum number of distance education courses that
2-8 may be excluded from the exemption under that subsection; and

2-9 (2) a uniform listing of degree programs covered by
2-10 the exemption under this section.

2-11 SECTION 3. (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating
2-12 Board shall adopt the rules required by Section 54.353(f),
2-13 Education Code, as amended by this Act, as soon as practicable after
2-14 the effective date of this Act.

2-15 (b) Section 54.353, Education Code, as amended by this Act,
2-16 applies beginning with tuition and laboratory fees charged for the
2-17 2019 fall semester. Tuition and laboratory fees charged for an
2-18 academic period before that semester are covered by the law in
2-19 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 4. 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.

2-26 * * * * *