BILL ANALYSIS

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

State law provides tuition benefits for surviving spouses and children of certain public servants. However, it has been noted that the law is limited to surviving children who are minors and that surviving children who may be college students over age 18 are ineligible for these benefits, such as in the case of the daughter of Caleb Rule, a police officer from Fort Bend County who was killed in the line of duty. H.B. 133 seeks to make changes to eligibility for education benefits to ensure Texas takes care of the families of first responders who give their lives in the line of duty.

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. 133 amends the Education Code to make the following changes to eligibility for certain education benefits at a public institution of higher education:
- clarifies the eligibility of a surviving spouse of certain public servants; and
- extends the eligibility of a surviving child of such a public servant to a child who meets the following conditions:
  - the child is younger than 25 years of age on the date of the individual's death; and
  - the child, if not a biological or adopted child of the individual, was claimed as a dependent on the individual's federal income tax return for the year preceding the year of the individual's death.

The bill applies beginning with costs charged for the spring 2022 semester.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.