

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 3625  
By: Parker  
Higher Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The governor's university research initiative, which is administered by the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office within the office of the governor, provides essential funding for Texas public institutions of higher education seeking to recruit distinguished researchers from across the world. These distinguished researchers include Nobel laureates or the recipients of an equivalent honor, as well as members of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, or the National Academy of Medicine, and since the initiative's establishment in 2015, it has assisted five public universities to recruit 19 distinguished researchers, helping to boost the Texas economy.

However, there are concerns that most individuals who have reached such a high level of achievement are typically further along in their careers. C.S.H.B. 3625 seeks to address these concerns by enacting measures to provide public universities greater recruitment flexibility to attract talented mid-career researchers, helping to ensure that the state has a pipeline of researchers who will remain in Texas for decades.

### **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. 3625 amends Subchapter H, Chapter 62, Education Code, as added by Chapters 323 (S.B. 632) and 915 (H.B. 26), Acts of the 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, to establish the governor's university research initiative advisory board to do the following:

- assist the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office (TEDTO) with the review and evaluation of applications for funding of grant proposals under the governor's university research initiative; and
- make recommendations to TEDTO for approval or disapproval of those applications.

The bill sets out the composition of the nine-member advisory board, provides for the administration of the board, and exempts the board's size, composition, and duration from statutory provisions regarding state agency advisory committees.

C.S.H.B. 3625 specifies that TEDTO may adopt any rules it considers necessary to administer the governor's university research initiative in consultation with the commissioner of higher education. The bill requires the commissioner to recommend to TEDTO the types of national academic recognitions that are considered to be highly prestigious for purposes of determining

which individuals or groups qualify as a "distinguished researcher." The bill revises the definition of "distinguished researcher" for purposes of the governor's university research initiative to do the following:

- specify that such a researcher is an individual researcher; and
- include in that definition an individual researcher who has attained a highly prestigious national academic recognition, as defined by TEDTO rule, and a group of researchers who also have attained the recognition.

C.S.H.B. 3625 repeals Subchapter H, Chapter 62, Education Code, as added by Chapter 448 (H.B. 7), Acts of the 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.

#### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

C.S.H.B. 3625 differs from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways by conforming to certain bill drafting conventions.