

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 3993  
By: Canales  
Higher Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) was officially established by the 83rd Legislature as a successor institution to The University of Texas-Pan American and The University of Texas at Brownsville, which were abolished. It has been noted that several statutory provisions still refer to these predecessor institutions, which has resulted in duplicative provisions regarding student fees. There have been calls to update these provisions to accurately reflect the operation of UTRGV and to ensure that the university can operate its facilities and honor its contractual commitments to Texas Southmost College. C.S.H.B. 3993 seeks to enact those updates.

### **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C.S.H.B. 3993 amends the Education Code, Health and Safety Code, and Government Code to update outdated references to The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) and The University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB), which were previously abolished and replaced with The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV).

C.S.H.B. 3993 makes certain clarifying changes regarding fees imposed on UTRGV students, as the fee provisions for the abolished predecessor institutions conflict. With respect to student union fees, the bill makes provisions that applied to UTPA applicable to UTRGV and clarifies the purpose for which such a fee may be imposed.

C.S.H.B. 3993 specifies that the cap on the sports recreation and wellness facility fee that may be imposed on UTRGV students is \$79 per student for each regular semester and \$39.50 per student each term of the summer session, as it was for UTB. The bill also clarifies the restrictions on fee increases and provides for the following with respect to use of the fee:

- a requirement for money in the sports recreation and wellness facility account, to which the fee is deposited, to be used to the extent required in accordance with the terms of the settlement agreement between the board of regents of The University of Texas System and the board of trustees of the Texas Southmost College District, as amended from time to time, terminating the partnership agreement that was previously authorized between the district and The University of Texas at Brownsville; and

- the authority of the board of regents to use, and the authority of the board of trustees of the Texas Southmost College District to pledge, revenue from the fee to pay certain obligations issued in relation to financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, renovating, or improving a wellness, recreational, and fitness complex owned by Texas Southmost College and used by UTRGV under the terms of the settlement agreement.

C.S.H.B. 3993 provides that an intercollegiate athletics fee may be imposed on UTRGV students in an amount not to exceed \$15 per semester credit hour for each regular semester or summer session and requires the total amount of any compulsory student services fees charged to UTRGV students to be reduced by \$15 per semester credit hour beginning with the first semester in which an intercollegiate athletics fee is charged. The intercollegiate athletics fee may not be considered in determining the maximum amount of student services fees that may be imposed. The bill restricts use of revenue from the intercollegiate athletics fee to financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, renovating, or improving an athletic facility or for operating an intercollegiate athletics program at the university.

C.S.H.B. 3993 repeals the following provisions of the Education Code:

- Section 54.546; and
- Section 54.550.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

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

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

While C.S.H.B. 3993 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The original required the total amount of any compulsory student services fees charged to UTRGV students to be reduced by \$15 per semester credit hour for the first semester in which an intercollegiate athletics fee is charged, whereas the substitute requires that reduction per semester credit hour beginning with the first semester in which the intercollegiate athletics fee is charged.