By:  Raney, Parker (Senate Sponsor - Bettencourt) H.B. No. 4361

(In the Senate - Received from the House May 17, 2021; May 17, 2021, read first time and referred to Committee on Higher Education; May 21, 2021, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 9, Nays 0; May 21, 2021, sent to printer.)

COMMITTEE VOTE

               Yea Nay Absent  PNV

Creighton       X

West            X

Birdwell        X

Blanco          X

Miles           X

Paxton          X

Springer        X

Taylor          X

Zaffirini       X

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to off-campus workforce education or lower-division programs offered by a public institution of higher education at the request of an employer.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.981 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.981.  OFF-CAMPUS WORKFORCE EDUCATION OR LOWER-DIVISION PROGRAMS REQUESTED BY EMPLOYERS. An institution of higher education may enter into an agreement with an employer to provide a credit or noncredit off-campus workforce education or lower-division program to the institution's students at a site requested by the employer without the approval of a higher education regional council established under Subchapter N, regardless of whether the site at which the program would be offered is located within the institution's uniform state service region or, if the institution is a public junior college, within the junior college district's service area, if:

(1)  the employer has solicited an agreement to offer the program at that site with another institution of higher education that offers the same or substantially equivalent coursework as that requested by the employer;

(2)  the proposed site for the off-campus program is located within the uniform state service region in which the institution described by Subdivision (1) is located or, if the institution is a public junior college, within the junior college district's service area; and

(3)  the institution of higher education described by Subdivision (1) does not finalize an offer to enter into an agreement with the employer that meets the employer's specifications for the off-campus program within six weeks after the employer's initial written solicitation requesting the institution to offer the program.

SECTION 2.  Section 51.981, Education Code, as added by this Act, applies beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2021.

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