

By: Dutton

H.B. No. 814

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to an exemption from or refund of tuition and fees for certain lower-division students enrolled in a general academic teaching institution who maintain a high grade point average.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 54, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 54.220 to read as follows:

Sec. 54.220. EXEMPTION FOR RESIDENT LOWER-DIVISION STUDENTS AT GENERAL ACADEMIC TEACHING INSTITUTIONS FOR MAINTAINING HIGH ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE. (a) In this section, "general academic teaching institution" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) An entering freshman student enrolled in a general academic teaching institution is entitled to a refund of the tuition and required fees paid by the student under this chapter for the first semester or term for which the student enrolls at that institution if the student:

(1) graduated from a private high school, including a home school, or public high school in this state;

(2) is classified as a Texas resident under Subchapter B; and

(3) for all courses attempted that initial semester or term earns a grade point average of at least 3.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent.

(c) To receive a refund under Subsection (b), the student

1 must apply to the general academic teaching institution for the
2 refund in the manner required by the institution not later than the
3 first anniversary of the last class day of the semester or term for
4 which the student seeks a refund.

5 (d) A student enrolled in a general academic teaching
6 institution is exempt from the payment of tuition and required fees
7 authorized by this chapter for a semester or term of the student's
8 first two academic years, other than a semester or term described by
9 Subsection (b), at that institution if the student:

10 (1) graduated from a private high school, including a
11 home school, or public high school in this state;

12 (2) is classified as a Texas resident under Subchapter
13 B; and

14 (3) maintains an overall grade point average of at
15 least 3.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent for all prior
16 coursework attempted at the institution.

17 (e) A student receiving an exemption under this section for
18 one or more semesters or terms may not enroll for the student's
19 third academic year at the general academic teaching institution
20 until the student passes an examination selected and administered
21 by the institution for that purpose.

22 (f) A general academic teaching institution shall fund
23 tuition and fee refunds and exemptions under this section from
24 available institutional funds, available local funds, or other
25 amounts appropriated to the institution, without regard to whether
26 those appropriations are specifically designated for this purpose.

27 (g) A student may not receive a refund or exemption under

1 this section for a semester or term that begins after the 2040-2041
2 academic year. This section expires September 1, 2041.

3 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with tuition and fees
4 charged for the 2021 fall semester.

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