

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1361  
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Higher Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Concerns have been raised around the availability of resources to assist postsecondary students who are parents. According to the American Council on Education, over a quarter of all undergraduate college students are raising children, and about 44 percent are doing so without the support of a partner. At 80 percent, women represent the majority of single parents in college. These students are often working adults who must balance their work and school lives with parenting. H.B. 1361 seeks to address these concerns by providing for the designation of a liaison officer at each public institution of higher education to provide information on support services and other resources to student-parents, including public benefit programs, health coverage, employment and transportation assistance, and academic success strategies.

### **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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTIONS 1 and 3 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1361 amends the Education Code to require each public institution of higher education to designate at least one employee to act as a liaison officer for current or incoming students at the institution who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The bill requires the liaison officer to provide information to such students regarding support services and other resources available to the students at the institution, including the following:

- resources to access public benefits programs and medical and behavioral health coverage and services;
- parenting and child care resources;
- employment assistance;
- transportation assistance;
- student academic success strategies; and
- any other resources developed by the institution to assist the students.

The bill requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to designate at least one THECB employee to act as a liaison officer for current or incoming students at institutions of higher education who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The bill requires the liaison officer to assist in coordinating college readiness and student success efforts relating to those students.

H.B. 1361 requires an institution, not later than May 1 of each academic year, to submit to the THECB a report containing specified information and other data prescribed by THECB rule,

including the number of applicable students enrolled at the institution and certain demographic and academic data regarding those students. The bill requires the THECB to adopt rules to administer the bill's provisions, including rules to ensure compliance with federal law regarding confidentiality of student medical or educational information and any state law relating to the privacy of student information.

H.B. 1361 applies beginning with the 2023-2024 academic year.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.