

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 2920  
By: Paul  
Higher Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

College is a large investment in our future. It is an investment not only of dollars and cents, but of effort and time. Unfortunately, many students enroll in colleges and universities with scholastic and career expectations that institutions of higher education fail to meet, resulting in students with student loan debts and little ability to pay them back. C.S.H.B. 2920 seeks to increase transparency in higher education by providing for specific information to be made available to high school students and higher education students regarding the value of a credential program offered by a public institution of higher education.

### **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 SECTION 4 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 2920 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), from money appropriated or otherwise available for the purpose, to develop one or more electronic tools or platforms to provide information to assist prospective postsecondary students in assessing the value of a certificate program, associate or baccalaureate degree program, or other credential program offered by an institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education by comparing each institution with other institutions regarding the following:

- the relative total cost of obtaining the credential, based on the most recent data released through the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard online tool, including certain costs specified by the bill;
- the value of the credential as measured by comparing the median wage earned by students who graduated with the credential from the institution and the median student debt of students who graduated with the credential from the institution, as compared to the median student debt of all students who graduated with the credential, based on the most recent data released through the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard online tool or the tool's successor;
- the average student debt-to-income ratio of students who graduated with the credential from the institution and have student debt, including the estimated monthly student loan payment, computed using the standard 10-year repayment plan;
- the percentage of students who fully repay student debt within the standard 10-year repayment period or, if applicable, the percentage of students in all credential programs who fully repay student debt within the standard 10-year repayment period; and

- educational outcomes for students seeking the credential, including outcomes specified by the bill.

The bill authorizes the THECB to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source to implement the bill's provisions relating to information to assist students in assessing the value of postsecondary credentials and requires the THECB to adopt rules as necessary to implement those provisions, including rules to ensure compliance with federal and state law regarding the confidentiality of student information.

C.S.H.B. 2920 requires the information prepared by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) comparing institutions of higher education in Texas to be given to any public or private school student upon request. The bill requires such information to assist prospective postsecondary students in assessing the value of a credential program offered by an institution of higher education by comparing each institution with other institutions using information included in the electronic tools or platforms developed by the THECB. The bill requires an electronic common admission application form and each institution's website to include a prominent link to the electronic tools or platforms developed by the THECB.

C.S.H.B. 2920 amends the Government Code to require a credential library established under the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative to include the information included in the electronic tools or platforms developed by the THECB.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

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

### **COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 2920 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute includes the following provisions that were not in the introduced:

- a requirement for the THECB to develop one or more electronic tools or platforms to provide specified information to assist prospective postsecondary students in assessing the value of a credential program;
- an authorization for the THECB to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations;
- a requirement for the THECB to adopt rules as necessary; and
- a requirement for an electronic common admission application form and each institution of higher education website to include a link to the electronic tools or platforms developed by the THECB.

The substitute omits the following from the introduced:

- a provision that required an institution of higher education to disclose to a student on the student's enrollment in or transfer to a credential program at the institution specified information posted on TEA's website relating to the program; and
- provisions establishing the frequency with which the information must be made available and updated.