

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 371
By: Eckhardt
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, a student must complete four years of ROTC training to be eligible for the Texas armed services scholarship. However, this four-year requirement either excludes students who are eligible to graduate in less than four years or requires them to stay in school longer than necessary. S.B. 371 seeks to amend the scholarship requirements to prevent exclusion of students who are eligible to graduate in less than four years by providing for a student's completion of one year of ROTC training for every year they receive the scholarship. The bill also requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to post online and provide to students information on ROTC service requirements for branches of the U.S. military forces.

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

S.B. 371 amends the Education Code to revise the required terms of agreement for a recipient of the Texas armed services scholarship, if that agreement involves the option to complete specified ROTC training, by replacing the requirement that the student complete four years of ROTC training with a requirement that the student complete one year of ROTC training for each year that the student receives the scholarship.

S.B. 371 requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to post on its website and provide to each student, before the student enters into such an agreement, information regarding the number of years of ROTC training that the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, U.S. Merchant Marine, U.S. Coast Guard, and other branches of the U.S. armed services require or recommend before entering into an applicable commitment or contract.

S.B. 371 applies beginning with a Texas armed services scholarship awarded for the 2024-2025 academic year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.