

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
88R3153 CXP-D

S.B. 371
By: Eckhardt; Campbell
Veteran Affairs
3/17/2023
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

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 need fewer than four years to graduate or forces those students to stay in school longer than necessary. S.B. 371 addresses this overly rigid eligibility requirement in order to allow more students to benefit from the scholarship program. The bill also requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to provide information on the minimum and recommended ROTC service requirements for each entity with which a scholarship recipient may choose to serve after graduating under the scholarship program.

As proposed, S.B. 371 amends current law relating to the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 61.9773(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Requires a student to enter into an agreement with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) as provided by Section 61.9773 (Agreement Requirements) to receive a scholarship under Subchapter FF (Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program). Requires that the agreement require the student to:

(1) complete:

(A) one year of ROTC training for each year that the student is enrolled in a degree or certificate program at a public or private institution of higher education in this state, up to a maximum requirement of four years of ROTC training; or

(B) creates this paragraph from existing text; and

(2)-(5) makes no changes to these subdivisions.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter FF, Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Section 61.97731, as follows:

Sec. 61.97731. NOTICE REGARDING MINIMUM AND REQUIRED ROTC TRAINING. Requires THECB to post on THECB's Internet website and provide to each student before the student enters into an agreement with THECB under Section 61.9773 information regarding the number of years of ROTC training that each entity described by Section 61.9773(a)(3) (relating to the entities a student is required to enter after graduation to receive a scholarship) requires or recommends before entering into a commitment or contract described by that subdivision.

SECTION 3. Provides that Section 61.9773(a), Education Code, as amended by this Act, applies beginning with a Texas Armed Services Scholarship awarded for the 2024–2025 academic year. Provides that a Texas Armed Services Scholarship awarded for an academic year before that academic year is governed by the law in effect when the scholarship was awarded, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2023.