

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
88R6572 JTZ-F

S.B. 969
By: Zaffirini
Subcommittee on Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The state has been facing a shortage of correctional officers and jailors, making it difficult to maintain and run prisons. This issue has been exacerbated by the lack of necessary incentives to attract and retain staff in these positions, which has resulted in increasingly dangerous environments for inmates and staff in correctional facilities.

S.B. 969 would require higher education institutions to exempt undergraduate students employed as correctional officers or jailors and enrolled in criminal justice or law enforcement-related degree programs from paying tuition and laboratory fees for such courses. This change would encourage more persons to become correctional officers or jailors.

As proposed, S.B. 969 amends current law relating to tuition and fee exemptions at public institutions of higher education for certain correctional officers and jailors.

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 54.3531(a), Education Code, as follows:

- (a) Requires the governing board of an institution of higher education to exempt from the payment of tuition and laboratory fees charged by the institution for a criminal justice or law enforcement course or courses an undergraduate student who meets certain requirements, including being employed in certain professions, including as a correctional officer or jailer by this state or by a political subdivision of this state.

SECTION 2. Provides that Section 54.3531 (Peace Officers Enrolled in Certain Courses), Education Code, as amended by this Act, applies beginning with tuition and fees charged for the 2023 fall semester. Provides that tuition and fees charged for an academic period before that semester are governed by the law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.