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By:  Paul, Tepper H.B. No. 2920

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the distribution or posting of, and the development by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board of electronic tools or platforms to provide, information regarding postsecondary education and career opportunities.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Section 7.040(a), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a)  The agency shall prepare information comparing institutions of higher education in this state and post the information on the agency's Internet website. Information prepared under this section shall be given to any [~~a~~] public or private school student who requests the information. The information shall:

(1)  identify postsecondary education and career opportunities, including information that states the benefits of four-year and two-year higher education programs, postsecondary technical education, skilled workforce careers, and career education programs;

(2)  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 by comparing [~~compare~~] each institution [~~of higher education~~] with other institutions using information included in the electronic tools or platforms developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board under Section 61.09022(a) [~~regarding:~~

[~~(A)  the relative cost of tuition;~~

[~~(B)  the retention rate of students;~~

[~~(C)  the graduation rate of students;~~

[~~(D)  the average student debt;~~

[~~(E)  the loan repayment rate of students; and~~

[~~(F)  the employment rate of students~~];

(3)  identify the state's future workforce needs, as projected by the Texas Workforce Commission; and

(4)  include annual wage information for the top 10 highest demand jobs in this state, as identified by the Texas Workforce Commission.

SECTION 2.  Section 51.762(b-1), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b-1)  An electronic common admission application form adopted under this section must include a prominent link to the electronic tools or platforms developed by the board under Section 61.09022 [~~comparative gainful employment data regarding institutions of higher education, including information described by Section 7.040, on a website maintained by the board using data compiled by the board in coordination with the Texas Workforce Commission~~].

SECTION 3.  Section 51.763(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b)  The form must:

(1)  allow each applicant to:

(A)  apply electronically to one or more of the general academic teaching institutions within the university system; and

(B)  indicate preferences for admission between those institutions; and

(2)  include a prominent link to the electronic tools or platforms developed by the board under Section 61.09022 [~~comparative gainful employment data regarding institutions of higher education, including information described by Section 7.040, on a website maintained by the board using data compiled by the board in coordination with the Texas Workforce Commission~~].

SECTION 4.  Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 61.09022 to read as follows:

Sec. 61.09022.  INFORMATION TO ASSIST STUDENTS IN ASSESSING VALUE OF POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS. (a) From money appropriated or otherwise available for the purpose, the board shall 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:

(1)  the relative cost of obtaining the certificate, degree, or other credential, based on the most recent data released through the United States Department of Education's College Scorecard online tool or a successor tool, including:

(A)  the total cost of attendance, including:

(i)  the total cost of tuition and fees; and

(ii)  the median cost of room and board; and

(B)  the estimated net cost remaining after subtracting from the amount described by Paragraph (A) the average amount of student financial aid granted to the typical student for the program;

(2)  the value of the certificate, degree, or other credential as measured by comparing:

(A)  the median wage earned by students who graduated with the certificate, degree, or other credential from the institution; and

(B)  the median student debt of students who graduated with the certificate, degree, or other credential from the institution as compared to the median student debt of all students who graduated with the certificate, degree, or other credential, based on the most recent data released through the United States Department of Education's College Scorecard online tool or a successor tool;

(3)  the average student debt-to-income ratio of students who graduated with the certificate, degree, or other credential from the institution and have student debt, including the estimated monthly student loan payment, computed using the standard 10-year repayment plan;

(4)  the percentage of students who fully repay student debt within the standard 10-year repayment period or, if this information is not available for the program, the percentage of students in all certificate programs, degree programs, or other credential programs who fully repay student debt within the standard 10-year repayment period; and

(5)  educational outcomes for students seeking the certificate, degree, or other credential, including:

(A)  for a program designed to be completed in more than one year, the percentage of students who continue in the program after the first year of study;

(B)  the graduation rate;

(C)  the percentage of students who withdraw or transfer from the institution and subsequently graduate with the certificate, degree, or other credential from another institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education;

(D)  the percentage of students who withdraw from the institution and do not enroll in the program at another institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education within three years of the withdrawal; and

(E)  the percentage of graduates employed in a field related to the certificate program, degree program, or other credential program within one year of graduation.

(c)  The board may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source to implement this section.

(d)  The board shall adopt rules as necessary to implement this section, including rules to ensure compliance with federal and state law regarding the confidentiality of student information.

SECTION 5.  Section 7.040(c), Education Code, is transferred to Section 61.09022, Education Code, as added by this Act, redesignated as Section 61.09022(b), Education Code, and amended to read as follows:

(b) [~~(c)~~]  Each institution of higher education shall include on its Internet website, in a prominent location that is not more than three hyperlinks from the website's home page, a link to the electronic tools or platforms developed by the board [~~information posted on the agency's Internet website~~] under Subsection (a).

SECTION 6.  Section 2308A.007, Government Code, is amended by adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:

(a-1)  A credential library established under this section must include the information included in the electronic tools or platforms developed by the coordinating board under Section 61.09022(a), Education Code.

SECTION 7.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2023.