88R2504 CXP-F

By:  Eckhardt S.B. No. 635

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the development of a state information technology credential offered by public junior colleges to address shortages in the state information resources workforce.

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

SECTION 1.  Section 2054.061(b), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b)  The department shall annually analyze:

(1)  the department's staffing needs;

(2)  the need for and cost-effectiveness of contracting for consultants and outside staff;

(3)  whether the department could use department staff to accomplish tasks proposed for the consultants and outside staff; [~~and~~]

(4)  whether and what type of training or additional resources are necessary for the department to use the department's own staff to accomplish tasks proposed for the consultants or outside staff; and

(5)  whether entering into an agreement with a public junior college district under Section 2054.0701 is appropriate to assist the department in meeting staffing needs.

SECTION 2.  Subchapter C, Chapter 2054, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 2054.0701 to read as follows:

Sec. 2054.0701.  STATE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CREDENTIAL. (a) The department may enter into an agreement with a public junior college district under Section 130.0081, Education Code, to offer a program leading to a state information technology credential to address shortages in the state information resources workforce.

(b)  A program offered under this section must:

(1)  be approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in accordance with Section 61.0512, Education Code;

(2)  develop the knowledge and skills necessary for an entry-level information technology position in a state agency; and

(3)  include a one-year apprenticeship with:

(A)  the department;

(B)  another relevant state agency;

(C)  an organization working on a major information resources project; or

(D)  a regional network security center established under Section 2059.202.

(c)  The executive director shall update the department's intra-agency career ladder program to ensure that an associate degree together with a credential awarded under this section may be substituted for a four-year baccalaureate degree.

(d)  The classification officer in the office of the state auditor shall review the state's position classification plan to determine whether an associate degree together with a credential awarded under this section may be substituted for a four-year baccalaureate degree and revise relevant job descriptions accordingly.

(e)  If a program offered under this section is not fully funded through tuition and other money of the public junior college district available for the purpose, the department may:

(1)  use any money available to the department for the purpose to offer a program under this section; and

(2)  solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source for purposes of offering a program under this section.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.