

By: Cole

H.B. No. 683

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the exemption of tuition and laboratory fees at public institutions of higher education for certain paramedics.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 54, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 54.3532 to read as follows:

Sec. 54.3532. PARAMEDICS ENROLLED IN CERTAIN COURSES. (a)

The governing board of an institution of higher education shall exempt from the payment of tuition and laboratory fees any student enrolled in one or more courses offered as part of an emergency medical services curriculum who is employed as a paramedic by a political subdivision of this state.

(b) An exemption provided under this section does not apply to deposits that may be required in the nature of security for the return or proper care of property loaned for the use of students.

(c) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), a student who for a semester or term at an institution of higher education receives an exemption provided under this section may continue to receive the exemption for a subsequent semester or term at any institution only if the student makes satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate at that institution as determined by the institution for purposes of financial aid.

(d) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the exemption provided under this section does not apply to any amount of additional

1 tuition the institution elects to charge a resident undergraduate
2 student under Section 54.014(a) or (f).

3 (e) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the exemption provided
4 under this section does not apply to any amount of tuition the
5 institution charges a graduate student in excess of the amount of
6 tuition charged to similarly situated graduate students because the
7 student has a number of semester credit hours of doctoral work in
8 excess of the applicable number provided by Section 61.059(1)(1) or
9 (2).

10 (f) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the governing board of
11 an institution of higher education is not required to provide an
12 exemption under this section for a course offered exclusively
13 through distance education to a number of students enrolled in the
14 course in excess of 20 percent of the maximum student enrollment
15 designated by the institution for that course.

16 (g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall
17 adopt:

18 (1) rules governing the granting or denial of an
19 exemption provided under this section, including rules:

20 (A) prescribing the educational attainment or
21 level of certification necessary to qualify for an exemption as a
22 paramedic;

23 (B) relating to the determination of a student's
24 eligibility for an exemption; and

25 (C) relating to the exclusion from the exemption
26 under Subsection (f) of a distance education course, including
27 prescribing the maximum number of distance education courses that

1 may be excluded from the exemption under that subsection; and
2 (2) a uniform listing of degree programs covered by
3 the exemption provided under this section.

4 SECTION 2. (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating
5 Board shall adopt the rules required by Section 54.3532, Education
6 Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable after the
7 effective date of this Act.

8 (b) Section 54.3532, Education Code, as added by this Act,
9 applies beginning with tuition and laboratory fees charged for the
10 2023 fall semester. Tuition and laboratory fees charged for an
11 academic period before that semester are governed by the law in
12 effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the
13 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

14 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
15 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
16 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
17 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
18 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.