

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

C.S.H.B. 2853
By: Perez, Vincent et al. (Blanco)
Education K-16
5/25/2025
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The University of Texas at El Paso seeks to construct a new student union building on the university's campus, as the university has seen significant growth in its enrollment since the construction of the current student union in 1949. Additional spaces and services are needed to meet the demands of a growing student body. The current student union fee of \$30 per full semester was established in 1987. A referendum was issued to the student body to vote on an incremental increase of the fee per full semester from \$30 to a maximum of \$150. A majority of the student vote was in favor of the fee increase for the purpose of financing the demolition of the existing student union building and construction of the new building.

H.B. 2853 seeks to raise the maximum student union fee that The University of Texas at El Paso may charge a student to \$150 per semester, which may be used for financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and improving a student union building for The University of Texas at El Paso, including demolition of the existing student union building. The fee increase would be implemented incrementally beginning in Spring 2026, starting at \$70 per full semester, with a Fall 2026-Spring 2027 fee of \$120 until reaching the rate of \$150 for the Fall 2027-Spring 2028 semester.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.H.B. 2853 amends current law relating to student union building fees at The University of Texas at El Paso.

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 54.535(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Authorizes the board of regents of The University of Texas System to levy a student union fee for the sole purpose of financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and improving a student union building for The University of Texas at El Paso, including demolition of the existing student union building; provided, however, that the fee is prohibited from being increased to an amount that exceeds by at least 10 percent the amount of the fee levied during the preceding academic year, unless the increase is approved by a majority vote of students enrolled at the university participating in a general student election held for that purpose. Provides that a fee imposed under Section 54.535 (Student Union Fee; The University of Texas at El Paso) is in addition to any other fee the board is authorized by law to impose.

Deletes existing text authorizing the board of regents of The University of Texas System to levy a student union fee not to exceed \$30 per student for each regular semester or each summer session of six weeks or more, and not to exceed \$15 per student for each summer session of less than six weeks, for the sole purpose of financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and improving a student union building for The University of

Texas at El Paso; provided, however, that the fee is prohibited from being increased above \$15 per student for each regular semester or each summer session of six weeks or more and \$7.50 per student for each summer session of less than six weeks unless the increase is approved by a majority vote of those students participating in a general election. Deletes existing text providing that the fees herein authorized to be levied are in addition to any use or service fee now or hereafter authorized to be levied.

SECTION 2. Provides that Section 54.535, Education Code, as amended by this Act, applies beginning with student union fees collected for the 2026 spring semester.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2025.