

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3125
By: Guerra
Energy Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee of a need to prepare a geothermal energy production workforce in Texas, as Texas is primed for rapid geothermal energy development and investment by large companies due to the significant presence of high energy-producing zones of geothermal energy along the Gulf Coast and its position as an energy industry leader. Geothermal energy production is an emerging energy-generating technology with enormous potential that utilizes the heat stored within the earth. Additionally, according to the U.S. Department of Energy, geothermal energy is renewable and available 24 hours a day and 365 day a year, regardless of weather. H.B. 3125 seeks to ensure that Texas has a trained workforce in geothermal energy production by requiring the Texas Workforce Commission to establish a geothermal energy workforce education and training initiative that customizes education and training programs necessary to prepare students for entry into geothermal energy jobs and develops other strategies to support and incentivize education and training opportunities that address skills gaps in Texas' geothermal energy workforce.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Workforce Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 3125 amends the Labor Code to require the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), in consultation with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), by rule to establish and administer a geothermal energy workforce education and training initiative to develop and implement the following:

- customized education and training programs necessary to prepare students for entry into jobs in the geothermal energy industry in Texas; and
- other strategies to support and incentivize education and training opportunities that address skills gaps in the geothermal energy workforce in Texas.

H.B. 3125 requires TWC to do the following under the initiative:

- in consultation with representatives from the THECB, general academic teaching institutions, public technical institutes, public junior colleges, career schools or colleges, and employers in the geothermal energy industry, develop customized curriculum requirements for the following:

- degree or certificate programs to prepare students for jobs in the geothermal energy industry that, subject to applicable THECB approval, may be offered by institutions of higher education; and
- other programs of instruction leading to recognized educational credentials to prepare students for jobs in the geothermal energy industry that may be offered by career schools or colleges;
- identify opportunities to use workforce development funding administered by TWC to provide financial assistance for geothermal energy workforce training programs, subject to any requirements for or restrictions on the distribution of those funds; and
- promote and support the creation of partnerships between institutions of higher education and geothermal energy industry employers in Texas under which apprenticeship and employment opportunities in the geothermal energy industry are made available to students and graduates of the institutions, as applicable.

The bill defines the following:

- "career school or college" by reference to Education Code provisions relating to career schools and colleges; and
- "general academic teaching institution," "institution of higher education," "public technical institute," and "public junior college" by reference to the Higher Education Coordinating Act of 1965.

H.B. 3125 requires TWC, in consultation with the THECB and not later than September 1 of each year, to prepare and submit a report summarizing TWC's activities under the initiative to each standing committee of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over workforce development, higher education, or energy industry matters. The report may include TWC's recommendations for legislative or other action.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.