

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3976
By: Button
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that while many high demand professions require a fee to renew professional licenses, those professions also require highly qualified instructors. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, from 2023-2033, employment relating to health care, computers and engineering, and construction is projected to have the fastest employment growth of their respective industry sectors in the United States. The bill author further informed the committee that, given the need to train workers in these fields and that teaching jobs often pay less than a typical career in the respective high-demand field, waiving the license renewal fees will help attract and keep high quality instructors. C.S.H.B. 3976 seeks to do that by waiving renewal fees for faculty members or adjunct professors providing instruction in high demand fields to incentivize faculty to continue teaching these high-demand fields and better equip the Texas 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 applicable state licensing agencies in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3976 amends the Occupations Code to require a state agency that issues a license to practice as one of the following professionals by rule to waive the license renewal fee for a faculty member or adjunct professor at a public institution of higher education who provides instruction in the field for which the license is required:

- a registered nurse or vocational nurse licensed under the Nursing Practice Act;
- a state licensed pharmacist;
- a medical radiologic technologist certified under the Medical Radiologic Technologist Certification Act;
- a state certified or permitted respiratory care practitioner;
- an engineer licensed under the Texas Engineering Practice Act;
- a journeyman plumber or master plumber licensed under the Plumbing License Law;
- an air conditioning and refrigeration contractor licensed under the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Contractor License Law;
- a journeyman electrician or master electrician licensed under the Texas Electrical Safety and Licensing Act;
- a state certified public school educator; or
- a state certified bilingual education or special language program teacher.

The bill defines "faculty member" by reference to Education Code provisions related to higher education faculty development leaves of absence.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 3976 differs from the introduced only by including a Texas Legislative Council draft number in the footer.