

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 4443
By: Bhojani
Trade, Workforce & Economic Development
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that there is a growing need for workers trained in specialized skills to address workforce shortages in energy-efficient technologies. C.S.H.B. 4443 seeks to resolve this workforce shortage by creating a pilot program in the Dallas-Fort Worth area to provide students at public junior colleges and public technical institutes with targeted education and training for entry into jobs in industries using energy-efficient technologies.

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, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 4443 amends the Labor Code to require the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), in consultation with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), to establish and administer a pilot program in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area under which TWC partners with public junior colleges, public technical institutes, and energy-efficient technology employers to provide necessary education and training to students for entry into jobs in industries using energy-efficient technologies. The bill authorizes a public junior college or public technical institute participating in the program, subject to approval by the THECB, to offer dual credit courses to high school students or college-level courses to high school graduates participating in the pilot program. The bill requires TWC, in consultation with TEA and the THECB, to establish the following:

- curriculum requirements for courses and training offered under the pilot program;
- eligibility criteria for a student or an energy-efficient technology employer to participate in the pilot program; and
- a certificate of completion TWC may award to a pilot program participant for the successful completion of a course of study and training in energy-efficient technologies under the pilot program.

C.S.H.B. 4443 requires TWC, under the pilot program, to ensure that the local workforce development board serving the workforce development area in which the pilot program is administered maintains the following information for each pilot program participant following program completion, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex, income, and location:

- placement rates, wages paid, retention in employment statistics, the number of education and training-related placements, and other appropriate factors, including public welfare dependency and the pursuit of additional education; and
- data regarding the attainment of employment within the field of energy-efficient technologies.

The bill authorizes TWC, TEA, and the THECB to adopt rules as necessary for the administration of the bill's provisions.

C.S.H.B. 4443 requires TWC, not later than December 1, 2030, to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program at enhancing the entry rate of participants into careers in energy-efficient technologies and report the results of the evaluation to the legislature. The report must include TWC's recommendation on whether the pilot program should be implemented on a statewide basis. The bill's provisions expire September 1, 2031.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 4443 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute defines "public technical institute" by reference to the Higher Education Coordinating Act of 1965, whereas the introduced did not define that term.

The substitute revises the introduced version's requirement for TWC, in consultation with TEA and the THECB, to establish and administer a pilot program relating to careers in energy-efficient technologies in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area under which TWC partners with public junior colleges and energy-efficient technology employers for specified purposes by including public technical institutes among the entities with which TWC must partner under the program.

The substitute expands the applicability of the authorization for a public junior college participating in the program, subject to approval by the THECB, to offer dual credit courses to high school students or college-level courses to high school graduates participating in the pilot program, as in the introduced, to include an authorization for a public technical institute to do so.