

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 5180  
By: Wilson  
Higher Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

When selecting a college or university, many students consider numerous variables to ensure the best choice for their intended career path such as whether an institution is a health-related institution or a general academic institution, or the student's potential to diversify their educational experiences at the institution. However, as the bill author has informed the committee, institutions of higher education that merge, are acquired, or undergo name changes create uncertainty for students regarding the name of the institution that will appear on their diploma, which can consequently result in students receiving diplomas from an institution they have never attended or at which they have never taken classes or had any laboratory experience, nor even visited the campus. Thus, these students may have no affiliation or connection to the institution reflected on their diploma. C.S.H.B. 5180 seeks to standardize the process for diploma designation in the event of a merger, acquisition, or name change by requiring a public institution of higher education to provide students two diplomas on the student's graduation, including one with the original institution name and one with the new name.

### **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 this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 5180 amends the Education Code to require a public institution of higher education that merges with or is acquired by another postsecondary educational institution or changes the institution's name during the period of a student's enrollment at the institution to provide to the student on the student's graduation from the institution two diplomas, as follows:

- one diploma in the same style, design, or format, including symbols or other insignia, designating the original name of the institution on the date the student initially enrolled; and
- one diploma designating the name of the institution after the merger, acquisition, or name change.

The bill limits the students who are eligible to receive two diplomas in this manner to those who graduate from the institution of higher education within six years of the merger, acquisition, or name change. The bill prohibits the institution from charging a student an additional fee to receive a diploma under the bill's provisions.

C.S.H.B. 5180 applies beginning with a diploma provided by a public institution of higher education to a student for the 2025-2026 academic year.

## **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2025.

## **COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 5180 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.

Whereas the introduced required a public institution of higher education that merges or changes names to offer each student enrolled at the time of the name change the option to receive a diploma with the new institution name or the former institution name, the substitute requires such an institution that merges with or is acquired by another postsecondary educational institution or changes the institution's name during the period of a student's enrollment at the institution to provide to the student on the student's graduation from the institution two diplomas. Additionally, the substitute includes provisions absent from the introduced providing for the following:

- the required contents of each diploma;
- student eligibility to receive the two diplomas; and
- a prohibition against the institution charging an additional fee to receive such a diploma.

Whereas the introduced made the bill's provisions applicable beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year, the substitute makes the bill's provisions applicable beginning with a diploma provided by a public institution of higher education to a student for that academic year. The substitute changes the bill's effective date to provide for its possible immediate effect, contingent on receiving the requisite constitutional vote, whereas the introduced provided only for the bill to take effect September 1, 2025, with no possibility for immediate effect.