

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 5508
By: Bumgarner
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that the film, television, and digital media industries in Texas have grown significantly over the past two decades, that the demand for skilled technicians, editors, production staff, and digital content creators has continued to rise in Texas, and that, without strategic investment in workforce development, Texas risks losing future economic opportunities to states that have already made robust commitments to training and retaining media professionals. H.B. 5508 seeks to foster the continued development of the film, television, and digital media industries in Texas by establishing the Texas Film Academy with the mission of facilitating the creation of specialized higher education and workforce training programs in film production, post-production, and other related areas of these industries.

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

H.B. 5508 amends the Government Code to establish the Texas Film Academy to facilitate the creation and offering of specialized higher education and workforce training programs in film production, post-production, and other related areas of the film, television, and digital media industries in Texas. The bill establishes the purpose of its provisions is to facilitate the development and delivery of higher education and workforce training in the film, television, and digital media industries in Texas necessary to address the growing demand for skilled crew members in those industries, create jobs, foster economic growth, and strengthen Texas' appeal as a destination for film, television, and digital media productions.

H.B. 5508 requires the academy, in consultation with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), to operate in partnership with public institutions of higher education and industry leaders in Texas' film, television, and digital media industries to facilitate the offering of higher education programs and workforce training in the areas previously described. The bill establishes that the academy is administratively attached to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and requires TWC to provide administrative support services, staffing, and facilities necessary to assist the academy in performing the academy's duties.

H.B. 5508 establishes that the academy is governed by a board composed of nine directors appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate and that a member of the

board serves at the pleasure of the governor. The bill requires the board's membership to include the following:

- representatives of institutions of higher education;
- a representative of the THECB; and
- industry leaders in the film, television, or digital media industry.

H.B. 5508 requires the academy, in consultation with industry leaders and representatives of the THECB, public junior colleges, public technical institutes, and general academic teaching institutions, to develop customized curriculum requirements for associate degree and certificate programs and continuing education courses to prepare students for jobs in film, television, and digital media industries that, subject to THECB approval under applicable state law, if applicable, may be offered by public junior colleges or public technical institutes. The bill requires the academy and those previously described persons, in developing those curriculum requirements, to focus on developing curriculum for programs leading to high-wage jobs in the following areas:

- on-set production training;
- post-production techniques;
- grip and electric training;
- costume and set design;
- sound engineering;
- visual effects and animation; and
- project management in film and television production.

H.B. 5508 requires the academy to seek to enter into partnerships with public institutions of higher education located in regions throughout Texas to offer, both in person and by distance education, degree, certificate, and continuing education programs and courses developed by the academy. The bill also requires the academy to encourage those institutions to integrate courses developed by the academy into any existing degree, certificate, and continuing education programs offered by the institutions that are relevant to the bill's purpose.

H.B. 5508 requires the academy to seek to enter into partnerships with film studios, production companies, and industry associations in Texas to do the following:

- offer internships and apprenticeships that provide higher education students in Texas with hands-on experience in the film, television, or digital media industry; and
- ensure that the customized higher education and training programs developed by the academy are aligned with industry workforce needs.

The bill also requires the academy to host job fairs, networking events, and industry workshops to connect graduates with potential employers and provide guidance to entities that partner with the academy to provide internships and apprenticeships, or that provide equipment donations to the academy, on the existence of any state or local tax preferences that may be available to the entities.

H.B. 5508 authorizes the academy to solicit gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source for the bill's purposes. The bill requires the academy, not later than December 1 of each year, to prepare and submit to the governor and each standing committee of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over higher education or workforce development a written report that includes the following:

- a summary of the academy's progress and effectiveness that includes data on enrollment, degree or certificate program completion, and job placement for individuals participating in higher education programs or training developed by or offered in partnership with the academy; and
- recommendations for improvements to or expansion of the academy, including any need for additional funding.

The bill requires TWC to include in its annual report submitted under the bill not later than December 1, 2030, a summary of the results and impact of the academy, including a

recommendation on whether the academy should be continued, expanded, or terminated. The academy terminates and the bill's provisions expire September 1, 2032.

H.B. 5508 includes legislative findings providing that the establishment of the academy is essential to the support and growth of film, television, and digital media industries in Texas and that success of the academy will aid Texas in becoming a destination for film, television, and digital media productions.

H.B. 5508 requires a public institution of higher education that partners with the academy to offer a degree, certificate, or continuing education program to begin enrolling students in the program not later than the 2027 spring semester.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.