

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1534
By: Zaffirini
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill sponsor has informed the committee that, as the nuclear industry expands, Texas faces a shortage of skilled professionals in health physics, a field related to protecting persons and the environment from radiation exposure via risk assessments, safety protocols, and regulatory compliance. The bill sponsor has also informed the committee that although health physicists play a critical role in reactor operations, medical radiation applications, and environmental monitoring, state agencies have no authority under current law to conduct studies relating to workforce development in nuclear energy and radiological safety. S.B. 1534 seeks to address this issue by directing the Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to study health physics education in Texas.

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

S.B. 1534 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), in collaboration with the Texas Workforce Commission, to conduct a study on health physics education in Texas. The bill requires the study to identify gaps in health physics training programs provided by public institutions of higher education and assess workforce needs in the nuclear energy and radiological safety sectors. The bill requires the THECB, not later than December 1, 2026, to prepare and submit to each standing committee of the senate and house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over higher education or workforce development a written report that summarizes the results of the study and includes recommendations for legislative or other action based on the results of the study. The bill's provisions expire September 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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