

AN ACT

relating to establishing the Higher Education Research Security Council.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter 2, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.957 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.957. HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH SECURITY COUNCIL.

(a) In this section:

(1) "Council" means the Higher Education Research Security Council established under this section.

(2) "Postsecondary educational institution" means an institution of higher education or a private or independent institution of higher education, as those terms are defined by Section 61.003.

(3) "Tier one research institution" means a postsecondary educational institution in this state designated as R1: very high spending and doctorate production in the 2025 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education published by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.

(4) "University system" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) The Higher Education Research Security Council is established to promote secure academic research at tier one

1 research institutions while mitigating the risk of foreign
2 espionage and interference.

3 (c) The council is composed of:

4 (1) each research security officer designated under
5 Section 51.956; and

6 (2) a research security officer designated by each
7 private or independent institution of higher education, as defined
8 by Section 61.003, that elects to participate in the council.

9 (d) If the governing board of a university system has
10 designated under Section 51.956 a research security officer for
11 each institution of higher education under the governing board's
12 management and control, the chancellor of the university system
13 shall designate one of the research security officers to serve as a
14 voting member on the council. The other research security officers
15 designated by the governing board under Section 51.956 to serve in
16 an institutional capacity shall serve as nonvoting members on the
17 council.

18 (e) A council member serves at the will of the person who
19 designated the member.

20 (f) A vacancy on the council shall be filled in the same
21 manner as the original designation.

22 (g) The council member designated under Section 51.956 for
23 The Texas A&M University System shall serve as the initial
24 presiding officer of the council.

25 (h) The council shall:

26 (1) identify best practices for a tier one research
27 institution to conduct research securely while mitigating the

1 threat of foreign espionage and interference;

2 (2) develop a research security policy that a tier one
3 research institution shall adopt to improve research security;

4 (3) establish an accreditation process under which the
5 council shall award a tier one research institution an
6 accreditation for security excellence;

7 (4) promote attendance at the annual academic security
8 and counter exploitation program seminar offered by The Texas A&M
9 University System; and

10 (5) develop and offer an annual training program for
11 tier one research institution security officers that includes:

12 (A) background and academic history checks of
13 researchers; and

14 (B) research security and integrity tools and
15 software that must be used to prevent the loss of intellectual
16 capital.

17 (i) The council shall meet at least once each quarter.

18 (j) A meeting conducted under Subsection (i) must be in
19 person or by video conference call, as determined by the presiding
20 officer.

21 (k) The council shall prepare and submit to the governor,
22 the attorney general's office, and the presiding officer of each
23 legislative committee with primary jurisdiction over higher
24 education an annual report on the status of research security at
25 tier one research institutions and any associated recommendations.

26 (l) A report submitted under Subsection (k) is confidential
27 and is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government

1 Code.

2 (m) The council may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and
3 donations for purposes of this section but may not solicit or accept
4 a gift, grant, or donation from an entity or country:

5 (1) prohibited from participating in federal
6 contracts under Section 889, John S. McCain National Defense
7 Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115-232);

8 (2) identified as a Chinese military company by the
9 United States Department of Defense in accordance with Section
10 1260H, William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization
11 Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Pub. L. No. 116-283);

12 (3) owned by the government of a country designated as
13 a foreign adversary by the United States secretary of commerce
14 under 15 C.F.R. Section 791.4; or

15 (4) controlled by a governing or regulatory body
16 located in a country described by Subdivision (3).

17 SECTION 2. (a) Not later than October 1, 2025, the
18 appropriate entities shall designate the members of the Higher
19 Education Research Security Council established under Section
20 51.957, Education Code, as added by this Act.

21 (b) Not later than January 1, 2026, the Higher Education
22 Research Security Council established under Section 51.957,
23 Education Code, as added by this Act, shall hold its initial
24 meeting.

25 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1273 passed the Senate on April 10, 2025, by the following vote: Yeas 28, Nays 2; and that the Senate concurred in House amendment on May 12, 2025, by the following vote: Yeas 29, Nays 1.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1273 passed the House, with amendment, on May 6, 2025, by the following vote: Yeas 139, Nays 5, one present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor