

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 596
By: Estes
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to interested parties, enrollment at Texas Woman's University has experienced dramatic recent growth which, while welcome, has put a strain on the university's resources and infrastructure. The parties suggest that the current student union does not have the capacity to properly serve the student body and needs a replacement to accommodate current students and future growth. C.S.S.B. 596 seeks to provide for an increase in the student centers fee at the university for the time period necessary to finance construction of a new student union.

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.S.B. 596 amends the Education Code to raise the caps on the regular, fixed student centers fee the board of regents of Texas Woman's University may levy on each student from \$40 to \$75 for each semester of the long session and from \$20 to \$35 for each term of the summer session. The bill removes the requirements that the board keep the collected fees in an account apart from the educational and general funds of the university, deposit the fees in a depository bank designated by the board, and secure the deposits as required by law. The bill instead requires fee revenue to be deposited to the credit of an account known as the "Texas Woman's University Student Center Fee Account" under the control of the university's student fee advisory committee. The bill requires the committee to annually submit to the university president the committee's recommendation for any change to the fee amount and a complete and itemized budget for the student center together with a complete report of all student center activities conducted during the past year and all expenditures made in connection with those activities. The bill requires the president to submit the budget to the board as part of the university's institutional budget and authorizes the board to make changes in the budget that the board determines are necessary.

C.S.S.B. 596 authorizes the board to increase the amount of the fee for a semester or summer session to an amount capped at \$150 if the increase is approved by a majority vote of those students participating in a general election called for that purpose. The bill prohibits the increased amount from being charged after the fifth academic year in which the increased amount is first charged unless, before the end of that academic year, the institution has issued bonds payable from the fee, in which event the increased amount may not be charged after the academic year in which all such bonds, including refunding bonds for those bonds, have been

fully paid.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.

COMPARISON OF SENATE ENGROSSED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.S.B. 596 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the engrossed and committee substitute versions of the bill.

SENATE ENGROSSED

SECTION 1. Section 54.525, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (d) to read as follows:

(a) The board of regents of Texas Woman's University may levy a regular, fixed student fee of not less than \$25 or more than \$75 [~~\$40~~] per student for each semester of the long session and of not less than \$12.50 or more than \$35 [~~\$20~~] per student for each term of the summer session, as the board determines is just and necessary for the purpose of financing, improving, operating, maintaining, and equipping student centers and acquiring or constructing additions to student centers.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Section 54.525, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsections (a) and (c) and adding Subsection (d) to read as follows:

(a) The board of regents of Texas Woman's University may levy a regular, fixed student fee of not less than \$25 or more than \$75 [~~\$40~~] per student for each semester of the long session and of not less than \$12.50 or more than \$35 [~~\$20~~] per student for each term of the summer session, as the board determines is just and necessary for the purpose of financing, improving, operating, maintaining, and equipping student centers and acquiring or constructing additions to student centers.

(c) Revenue from a fee imposed under this section shall be deposited to the credit of an account known as the "Texas Woman's University Student Center Fee Account" under the control of the university's student fee advisory committee. Annually, the committee shall submit to the president of the university its recommendation for any change to the amount of the fee and a complete and itemized budget for the student center together with a complete report of all student center activities conducted during the past year and all expenditures made in connection with those activities. The president shall submit the budget to the board of regents as part of the university's institutional budget. The board of regents may make changes in the budget that the board determines are necessary [The board shall keep fees collected under this section in an account apart from the educational and general funds of the university. The board shall deposit the fees in a depository bank designated by the board and shall secure the deposits as required by

(d) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the board may increase the amount of the fee for a semester or summer session to an amount that does not exceed \$150 if the increase is approved by a majority vote of those students participating in a general election called for that purpose. The increased amount under this subsection may not be charged after the fifth academic year in which the increased amount is first charged unless, before the end of that academic year, the institution has issued bonds payable from the fee, in which event the increased amount may not be charged after the academic year in which all such bonds, including refunding bonds for those bonds, have been fully paid.

SECTION 2. The change in law made by this Act applies only to fees imposed for a semester or term that begins on or after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

law].

(d) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the board may increase the amount of the fee for a semester or summer session to an amount that does not exceed \$150 if the increase is approved by a majority vote of those students participating in a general election called for that purpose. The increased amount under this subsection may not be charged after the fifth academic year in which the increased amount is first charged unless, before the end of that academic year, the institution has issued bonds payable from the fee, in which event the increased amount may not be charged after the academic year in which all such bonds, including refunding bonds for those bonds, have been fully paid.

SECTION 2. Same as engrossed version.

SECTION 3. Same as engrossed version.