

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R6395 KEL-F

H.B. 3138
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Education
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Engrossed

DIGEST

Currently, Texas law does not allow Texas schools to discount tuition as part of a plan to increase graduation rates through positive incentives. H.B. 3138 would authorize Texas institutions of higher education to discount tuition for students enrolled in at least 15 semester credit hours and making satisfactory progress toward a degree, and would require such a reduction to be part of an overall plan to increase the average semester credit hour course load of students and to improve retention and graduation rates.

PURPOSE

As proposed, H.B. 3138 sets forth provisions regarding reduction in tuition for students enrolled in institutions of higher education.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 54A, Education Code, by adding Section 54.010, as follows:

Sec. 54.010. REDUCTION IN TUITION. (a) Authorizes the governing board of the body charged with policy direction of any public technical institute, public junior college, public senior college or university, medical or dental unit, or other agency of higher education (governing board) of an institution of higher education to reduce the amount of tuition charged to a student under this chapter to an amount less than the amount otherwise required by this chapter under certain conditions.

(b) Authorizes the governing board to offer a tuition reduction under this section in a fixed dollar amount, a percentage amount, or any other manner that the governing board considers appropriate.

(c) Prohibits the amount of tuition reduction offered to a student under this section for a semester or term from exceeding the amount of tuition that would have been charged to the student under this chapter for enrollment in three semester credit hours during that semester or term.

(d) Authorizes the governing board to prorate the amount of the reduction based on the number of semester credit hours in which the student is enrolled, or the length of the semester or term for which the student is enrolled.

(e) Provides that the governing board is not required to offer a tuition reduction under this section to all institutions of higher education under its governance or to all degree programs offered at an institution of higher education under its governance.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 54E, Education Code, by adding Section 54.5025, as follows:

Sec. 54.5025. PRORATION OF FEES. Authorizes the governing board of an institution of higher education to prorate the amount of any fee charged to the student under this chapter, based on the length of the semester or term for which a student is enrolled.

SECTION 3. Provides that this Act takes effect beginning with tuition and fees charged for the 1999 fall semester.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.

Effective date: upon passage.