

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R10663 JSA-D

C.S.S.B. 1535
By: West
Higher Education
4/14/1999
Committee Report (Substituted)

DIGEST

Currently, many students enter higher education through public and private junior colleges and the state's technical colleges. C.S.S.B. 1535 would create the Texas Rising Star Scholarship Program for public junior college and technical institute students.

PURPOSE

As proposed, C.S.S.B. 1535 creates the Texas Rising Star Scholarship Program for public junior college and technical institute students.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Sections 56.353(a) and (b) and Section 56.358(d), Chapter 56N, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 56, Education Code, by adding Subchapter N, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER N. TEXAS RISING STAR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Sec. 56.351. DEFINITIONS. Defines "coordinating board" and "eligible institution."

Sec. 56.352. PROGRAM NAME; PURPOSE. Provides that the student financial assistance program authorized by this subchapter is known as the Texas Rising Star Scholarship Program (program), and an individual scholarship awarded under this subchapter is known as a rising star scholarship (scholarship). Provides that the purpose of this subchapter is to provide a grant of money to enable qualified students to attend public junior colleges and public technical institutes in this state.

Sec. 56.353. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM. Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (coordinating board) to administer the program and to adopt any rules necessary to implement the program or this subchapter. Requires the coordinating board to adopt rules to determine which eligible persons receive a scholarship and to provide scholarships in the most efficient manner possible. Prohibits the total amount of rising star scholarships awarded in a state fiscal year from exceeding the amount available for the program from appropriations, gifts, grants, or other funds. Requires the coordinating board, in determining who would receive a scholarship, to give highest priority to awarding scholarships to students who demonstrate the greatest financial need.

Sec. 56.354. ELIGIBLE PERSON. Requires a person to meet certain criteria in order to be initially eligible for a rising star scholarship. Provides that a person is not eligible to receive a scholarship if the person has been granted a baccalaureate degree. Prohibits a person from receiving a scholarship for more than 75 semester credit hours or the equivalent.

Sec. 56.355. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS. Authorizes a person, after initially qualifying for a scholarship, receive a scholarship during a subsequent academic year in which the person is enrolled at an eligible institution only if the person meets certain academic criteria. Prohibits a person from receiving a scholarship during the next semester or term in which the person enrolls if the person fails to meet the academic criteria. Authorizes a person to become

eligible to receive a scholarship in a subsequent semester or term if the person meets certain requirements.

Sec. 56.356. SCHOLARSHIP PERIOD AND USE. Provides that a scholarship is awarded to an eligible person, except that, for a person who regains eligibility for a scholarship after the beginning of an academic year, the coordinating board may grant the person a scholarship for the remainder of the year. Authorizes a person receiving a scholarship to use the money for any usual and customary education-related expenses incurred by the person, including payment for certain items. Prohibits the coordinating board or an eligible institution from requiring a person to use the money to pay tuition and fees.

Sec. 56.357. SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT. Provides that the amount of a scholarship is determined by the coordinating board. Authorizes the amount of a scholarship to be reduced by any gift aid the person receives from another source.

Sec. 56.358. FUNDING. Provides that the program is funded by a combination of local funds and state appropriations as provided by this section. Sets forth provisions regarding funding of the program, including the solicitation and acceptance of gifts, grants, and donations, and procedures for obtaining state funds. Authorizes state funds set aside for scholarships at an eligible institution under this section for a fiscal year to be used to provide those scholarships only to the extent the institution provides at least twice that amount for scholarships in the same fiscal year from gifts, grants, and donations. Requires the coordinating board to establish procedures for the administration of this section, including procedures to ensure that state funds appropriated for the program are used exclusively to provide scholarships in accordance with this subchapter.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2000-2001 fiscal year. Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to establish procedures for the administration of Chapter 56N, Education Code, not later than January 1, 2000.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.

Effective date: upon passage.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

SECTION 1.

Changes existing Subchapter M to Subchapter N and renumbers existing sections.

Amends Section 56.351, Education Code, to define “coordinating board.”

Amends Section 56.352, Education Code, to add reference to public technical institutes.

Amends Section 56.353, Education Code, to set forth requirements of the coordinating board for the administration of the program. Deletes text regarding the governing board.

Amends Section 56.355, Education Code, to authorize a person to receive a scholarship during a subsequent academic year in which the person is enrolled at an eligible institution. Makes conforming changes.

Amends Section 56.356, Education Code, to add new heading. Authorizes the coordinating board to grant the person a scholarship for the remainder of the academic year except that, for a person who regains eligibility for a scholarship under Section 56.355(b) after the beginning of an academic year, a scholarship is awarded to an eligible person for the remainder of the academic year. Prohibits the coordinating board or an eligible institution from requiring a person to use the money to pay tuition and fees. Authorize the person to use the scholarship money for certain items.

Amends Section 56.357, Education Code, to provide that the amount of a scholarship is determined by the coordinating board. Makes conforming changes.

Amends Section 58.358, Education Code, to require the coordinating board, rather than the comptroller, to establish procedures for the administration of this section, including procedures to

ensure that state funds appropriated for the program are used exclusively to provide scholarships in accordance with this subchapter. Deletes text regarding the recovery of funds not used in accordance with this subchapter. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2.

Amends the Subsection (b) to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, rather than the comptroller, to establish procedures for the administration of Chapter 56N, rather than Section 56.308, Education Code, not later than January 1, 2000.