

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
78R5415 JSA-D

S.B. 800
By: Madla et al.
Subcommittee on Higher Education
3/19/2003
As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Historically, the southern sector of San Antonio has had limited access to certain higher educational opportunities. The Texas A&M Palo Alto Education Center System opened in the fall of 2000 on the campus of Alamo Community College District. Within two years, enrollment grew from 126 to 550 students, 44 percent of whom are full-time students. The Palo Alto campus, built for 2,500 students, currently serves 7,500, in addition to the 550 students in the A&M center. The majority of the center's classes are being held in portable buildings, more of which are needed. As proposed, S.B. 800 expedites the opening of Texas A&M University -- San Antonio if its enrollment numbers reach 2,500 students for one semester.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 87, Education Code, by adding Subchapter K, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER K. TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY -- SAN ANTONIO

Sec. 87.841. TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY -- SAN ANTONIO. (a) Provides that Texas A&M University -- San Antonio is a general academic teaching institution in Bexar County and a component of The Texas A&M University System under the management and control of The Texas A&M University System's board of regents (board).

(b) Authorizes the board to prescribe courses that lead to degrees customarily offered at leading American universities, and to award those degrees, including baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees in all fields of study. Prohibits any department, school, or degree program from being instituted without prior approval of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

(c) Provides that the board has the same powers and duties concerning Texas A&M University -- San Antonio as it does concerning Texas A&M University.

(d) Prohibits Texas A&M University -- San Antonio from operating as a general academic teaching institution until THECB certifies enrollment has reached the equivalent of 2,500 full-time students for one semester.

SECTION 2. Provides that Section 61.056, Education Code (Review of Legislation Establishing Additional Institutions), does not apply to this Act. Provides that this Act does not affect the board's authority to operate a system center or branch campus of any component institution of The Texas A&M University System in Bexar County.

SECTION 3. Provides that in accordance with Article VII, Section 18(c), Texas Constitution (Texas A&M University System; University of Texas System; Bonds or Notes Payable from Income of Available University Fund), if this Act receives a two-thirds vote of all members elected to each house, Texas A&M University -- San Antonio will be entitled to participate in

the funding provided by Article VII, Section 18, Texas Constitution (Texas A&M University System; University of Texas System; Bonds or Notes Payable from Income of Available University Fund).

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2003.