

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 105
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S/C on Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex is the largest metropolitan region in the United States without a public law school.

As proposed, S.B. 105 authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to conduct a feasibility study to create a public school of law in the Dallas/Fort Worth region to be located in Dallas and to be administered by the University of North Texas System. Once the University of North Texas at Dallas has been administered as an independent institution of higher education for five years, the law school shall become a professional school of the University of North Texas at Dallas.

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 Subchapter J, Chapter 105, Education Code, by adding Section 105.502, as follows:

Sec. 105.502. UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS SYSTEM SCHOOL OF LAW. (a) Authorizes the board of regents of the University of North Texas system (board) to establish and operate a school of law in Dallas as a professional school of the University of North Texas System (system).

(b) Authorizes the board to prescribe courses leading to customary degrees at other leading schools of law and to award those degrees.

(c) Requires the board to administer the law school as a professional school of the system until the University of North Texas at Dallas (university) has been administered as a general academic teaching institution for five years. Requires the law school, after that period, to become a professional school of the university. Entitles the law school to formula funding as if the law school were a professional school of a general academic teaching institution, until the law school becomes a professional school of the university.

(d) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to prepare a feasibility study to determine the actions the system must take to obtain accreditation of the law school before the board establishes a law school under this section but not later than June 1, 2008. Requires THECB to deliver the study to the chair of each legislative standing committee or subcommittee with jurisdiction over higher education.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.