

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
81R5352 JRJ-D

S.B. 1600
By: Watson
Higher Education
4/20/2009
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, researchers have no easy way of knowing what their counterparts across Texas, or even across campus, are doing. This makes it more difficult for researchers with a range of perspectives and backgrounds to work together on projects, which can limit the scope of the research or hinder the completion and commercialization of that work.

As proposed, S.B. 1600 amends current law relating to the creation of a database to track specialized technology research projects conducted by public universities, public university research facilities, and other state institutions.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 61.0823, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Section 61.0823, as follows:

Sec. 61.0823. STATEWIDE SPECIALIZED TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH DATABASE. (a) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to collect data and maintain a database relating to specialized technology research projects that are developed or conducted at institutions of higher education, research facilities of institutions of higher education, or other facilities operated by a state agency in order to facilitate coordination among the institutions and facilities on the projects.

(b) Requires the database to include:

(1) a list of any projects involving one or more of the following areas: energy research, including methods of creation, storage, distribution, and conservation of energy; biomedical science research; nanotechnology research, including nanomedicine; and other specialized technology research;

(2) for each project listed under Subdivision (1), a brief description of the project, including the field of technology involved, the entity involved with the project, and additional comments regarding the research THECB considers appropriate; and

(3) other relevant information and available resources in this state relating to specialized technology research, including expert faculty or research personnel, technology developed and patents obtained, and the location of and policies for the use of available research equipment.

(c) Authorizes THECB, in order to avoid duplication of efforts, through a memorandum of understanding, to work in conjunction with the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office in collecting data for and maintaining the database developed under this section.

(d) Requires THECB to allow public access to the information maintained in the database to the extent necessary to comply with state and federal laws regarding access to public information.

(e) Requires an institution of higher education, research facility of an institution of higher education, or other facility operated by a state agency, on request, to provide to THECB any information necessary for THECB to perform its duties under this section.

(f) Requires THECB to adopt rules for the administration of this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.