

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 489
By: Fraser et al.
Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas State Technical College System (TSTC) consists of several campuses across the state that provide courses in the area of technical-vocational higher education. The system is designed to improve the competitiveness of Texas business and industry by offering highly specialized technical programs.

S.B. 489 is designed as a clean-up of existing statute. It deletes the word "residential" from the definition of campus and redefines the West Texas campus of TSTC to include all the locations in Sweetwater, Abilene, Brownwood, and Breckenridge as one campus with multiple delivery sites.

The meaning of the term "residential unit" in the existing definition of campus is unclear. Not all TSTC campuses have a residential component or dormitory facilities. Deleting the word "residential" has no operational impact on the TSTC or other institutions of higher education.

Redefining the TSTC West Texas campus to include the extension centers at Abilene, Brownwood, and Breckenridge amends current law to reflect existing operations. The four locations operate as one unit. Additionally, all four locations are permanent sites owned by TSTC. The redefinition allows funds allocated from the Higher Education Assistance Fund (HEAF) to be used at the Abilene, Brownwood, and Breckenridge locations. Passage of S.B. 489 constitutes the legislative approval needed for HEAF eligibility under Section 17(k) (relating to prohibiting expending appropriations for acquiring land), Article 7 (Education), Texas Constitution. S.B. 489 has no fiscal impact upon state appropriations, HEAF, other institutions of higher education, or other TSTC campuses.

As proposed, S.B. 489 amends current law relating to the Texas State Technical College System.

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 Section 135.011(5), Education Code, to redefine "campus."

SECTION 2. Amends Section 135.02(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that the Texas State Technical College System is composed of, in addition to certain other locations, a campus serving West Texas that operates as a collective unit of strategically positioned permanent locations in the city of Sweetwater in Nolan County, the city of Abilene in Taylor County, the city of Brownwood in Brown County, and the city of Breckenridge in Stephens County. Deletes existing text including extension centers in the city of Brownwood in Brown County and the city of Abilene in Taylor County and an extension program offered through a rural technology center in the city of Breckenridge in Stephens County. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.