

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 37  
By: Zaffirini  
Higher Education  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The purpose of this legislation is to promote and effectively coordinate post-secondary education for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs). According to *Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020*, a report by the Georgetown Public Policy Institute at Georgetown University, 65 percent of all jobs will require some form of postsecondary education or training by 2020. Similarly, the Employment and Disability Institute at the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations reported in 2012 that the employment rate of working-age persons (ages 21 to 64) with disabilities in Texas was 37.4 percent, compared to 76.5 percent for persons without disabilities. In addition to these dismal statistics, Texas ranks last among states offering post-secondary educational opportunities for persons with IDD and only six institutions of higher education offer these opportunities. Gathering data on these programs would allow the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to coordinate efforts more effectively. If the growing disparities continue to be ignored, it could place additional barriers on employment, independence, and a higher quality of life for persons with IDDs.

S.B. 37 would require THECB to collect data regarding the participation in higher education of persons with IDDs, mirroring data collection for racial and ethnic minorities. It would also require THECB to maintain a database of the information submitted, continuously study the data collected, and make the information easily accessible to the public.

As proposed, S.B. 37 amends current law relating to a study of the participation of individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities in public higher education.

### **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 C, Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Section 61.081, as follows:

Sec. 61.081. CONTINUING STUDY OF PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION. (a) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to collect data and maintain a database relating to the participation of persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities in this state in public higher education, including data relating to applications, recruitment, admissions, retention, graduation, and professional licensing of persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

(b) Requires THECB to maintain a continuous study of the data collected under Subsection (a) and of factors affecting that data.

(c) Requires THECB to, through a memorandum of understanding, work in conjunction with the comptroller of public accounts of the State of Texas

(comptroller) in conducting the study in order to avoid duplication with any other study by the office of the comptroller.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2015.