

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 632
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Natural Resources & Economic Development
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Nobel Laureates and National Academy members have a tangible impact on the Texas economy by bringing new commercialization activity to the state. S.B. 632 creates the Governor's University Research Initiative to help recruit these Nobel Laureates and National Academy members to Texas public universities, which will be a catalyst for economic development. The bill abolishes the Emerging Technology Fund and splits the unexpended balances between the Governor's University Research Initiative and the Texas Enterprise Fund.

As proposed, S.B. 632 amends current law relating to certain funds for the enhancement of the state's economic and educational competitiveness, including the creation of the governor's university research initiative.

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 61, Education Code, by adding Subchapter W, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER W. GOVERNOR'S UNIVERSITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Sec. 61.921. DEFINITIONS. Defines "distinguished researcher" and "fund."

Sec. 61.922. PURPOSE. Provides that the governor's university research initiative is established to assist general academic teaching institutions and medical and dental units in recruiting distinguished researchers.

Sec. 61.923. ADMINISTRATION. (a) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to allocate funds in a manner consistent with Section 61.922 and to give priority to distinguished researchers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

(b) Prohibits the fund from being used to recruit distinguished researchers from general academic teaching institutions or medical and dental units located in the state.

Sec. 61.924. GOVERNOR'S UNIVERSITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE FUND. (a) Provides that the governor's university research initiative fund (fund) is a dedicated account in the general revenue fund.

(b) Provides that the fund consists of any amounts appropriated by the legislature for the fund.

SECTION 2. Repealer: Chapter 490 (Funding For Emerging Technology), Government Code.

SECTION 3. Provides that on the effective date of this Act:

(1) the Texas emerging technology fund is abolished and all of the equity, convertible notes, debt instruments, and other assets held in the fund are transferred to the Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company; and

(2) notwithstanding Subdivision (1) of this section, the unexpended cash balances in the Texas emerging technology fund are reallocated in equal amounts to:

(A) the Texas Enterprise Fund; and

(B) THECB to implement the governor's university research initiative, as created by this Act.

SECTION 4. (a) Provides that information collected under the Texas emerging technology fund concerning the identity, background, finance, marketing plans, trade secrets, or other commercially or academically sensitive information of an individual or entity having received an award from the fund remains confidential on and after the effective date of this Act unless the individual or entity consents to disclosure of the information, except as provided by Subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Provides that certain information collected during the administration of the Texas emerging technology fund is public information and may be disclosed under Chapter 552 (Public Information), Government Code. Sets forth the information.

SECTION 5. Effective date: September 1, 2015.