

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 2247
By: Hughes
Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In the November 2016 election, Lamar County voters approved entry into the taxing district for Paris Junior College (PJC). Prior to the election, the taxing district of PJC included the Paris City limits and one nearby school district. With the entire county now participating in providing tax revenue to PJC, the college is requesting that its governing board be adjusted to represent effectively and efficiently the interests of these taxpayers.

S.B. 2247 allows PJC's board to reduce the number of its trustees from nine to seven, with four of these members elected from Lamar County's four precincts and three members elected at large. In addition, S.B. 2247 allows PJC to adjust the election date of its board members to the November general election. Aligning four of PJC's board districts with county precinct lines and moving trustee elections to the November general election will save taxpayer money. Sharing county precinct and trustee district lines will allow the county and the college to reduce their combined costs associated with redistricting after every decennial census. In addition, moving the selection of college trustees to the November general election will allow PJC to share in election expenses with other local government entities placing items on the ballot.

Texarkana College (TC) has gone through a similar process. Bowie County voters approved entry into the college's taxing district in 2012, and the legislature authorized TC to reduce board membership to seven, aligning four of those seats with county precinct lines and leaving three at large. These good governance measures also would benefit PJC and Lamar County.

As proposed, S.B. 2247 amends current law relating to the Paris Junior College District.

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 E, Chapter 130, Education Code, by adding Section 130.0829, as follows:

Sec. 130.0829. GOVERNING BOARD OF PARIS JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICT. (a) Authorizes the governing board (board) of the Paris Junior College District, by resolution or order of the board, to, notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter, decrease the number of board members from nine to seven, with four members elected from respective commissioner precincts and three members elected at large. Requires a resolution or order of the board under this subsection to establish transition terms of office to conform to elections held in even-numbered years and staggered six-year terms.

(b) Authorizes the board of the Paris Junior College District, by resolution or order, to, notwithstanding Section 41.0052 (Changing General Election Date), Election Code, change the date on which the district holds its general election for board members to the November uniform election date. Requires the board to adjust the terms of office to conform to a change made to the election date under this subsection.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2017.