

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
85R23765 MM-D

C.S.S.B. 837  
By: Seliger  
Higher Education  
4/27/2017  
Committee Report (Substituted)

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

In addition to the rising cost of tuition at institutions of higher education, fees are also a significant cost to students attending college. Unlike tuition costs, which are determined by an institution's governing board, student fees can be raised through student elections, which traditionally have very low voter turnout, often less than 10 percent. Additionally, fees can be voted on by an institution's current student population and then continue for years to come and be charged to students who had no vote in the original fee election.

In order to authorize or raise existing student fees, S.B. 837 requires that student elections at general academic institutions have at least 10 percent of the student population participate in the election. S.B. 837 also requires the majority of those students participating have a certain amount of semester credit hours remaining to complete in their degree plan. (Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 837 amends current law relating to requirements for student elections to authorize or increase certain fees at public institutions of 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 E, Chapter 54, Education Code, by adding Section 54.5001, as follows:

Sec. 54.5001. PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENT FEE ELECTIONS. Provides that, notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter or other law, a general student election held at a general academic teaching institution for the purpose of authorizing a student fee or approving an increase in the amount of an existing student fee is not valid unless:

(1) at least 10 percent of the students enrolled at the institution to whom the fee, or the increased amount of the fee, would apply if currently in effect participate in the election; and

(2) at least 30 percent of the students participating in the election are students enrolled in lower-division courses at the institution.

SECTION 2. Makes application of Section 54.5001, Education Code, as added by this Act, prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.