

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 4165  
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Higher Education  
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Engrossed

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

Across the country, states have come to recognize the unique value of community colleges in awarding baccalaureate degrees to students for whom traditional four-year universities are infeasible. Such degree programs also help grow critical locally based workforces for new industries that can support underserved communities. Currently, 24 states including Texas allow community colleges to award bachelor's degrees and several have proposed legislation in recent years.

In rapidly growing areas, there is an immediate need for professional degree programs that four-year universities do not have the capacity to fill. Furthermore, these counties have diverse populations that could greatly benefit from affordable local institutions that could allow them to quickly gain the skills necessary for higher paying in-demand work. Specifically in Bexar County, the multiple Alamo Colleges are counted as one institution when determining how many baccalaureate degrees they may offer, and this bill increases the allocation of degrees to this "college system" to account for this technicality.

H.B. 4165 allows community colleges in counties of a certain size and at a certain distance from the Texas-Mexico border, as well as South Texas College, to offer up to six baccalaureate degrees.

H.B. 4165 amends current law relating to authorization by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for certain public junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs.

### **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 130.306, Education Code, by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsections (d) and (e), as follows:

(b) Prohibits a public junior college offering a baccalaureate degree program under this subchapter (Baccalaureate Degree Programs), except as otherwise provided by this section (Limitation), rather than except as provided by Subsection (a) (relating to prohibiting a public junior college offering a baccalaureate degree program from offering more than five baccalaureate degree programs at any time), from offering more than three baccalaureate degree programs at any time.

(d) Prohibits a public junior college offering a baccalaureate degree program under this subchapter that is located in a county with a population of more than 1,700,000 based on United States Census 2010 data and that is located within 180 miles of the Texas-Mexico border from offering more than five baccalaureate degree programs at any time.

(e) Prohibits South Texas College, at any time, from offering more than six baccalaureate degree programs under this subchapter.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.