

SUBJECT: Exempting community colleges from state employee contribution program

COMMITTEE: Higher Education — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 8 ayes — Rangel, Solis, Bailey, Cuellar, Dunnam, Kamel, Rabuck, E. Reyna

0 nays

1 absent — Rodriguez

WITNESSES: For — Ronald C. Baugh; Rey Garcia, Texas Association of Community Colleges

Against — None

On — Archie Bailey, State Employee Charitable Campaign

BACKGROUND : HB 903, enacted by the 73rd Legislature, established a statewide charitable program that allows for donations to charitable organizations by employees of state agencies and institutions of higher education, including junior colleges. Donations are sent to a central authority, which keeps a portion of the proceeds for administrative costs.

DIGEST: CSHB 2491 would stipulate that, for purposes of participation in the state employee charitable contribution campaign, a public junior college would not be considered an institution of higher education and employees not considered state employees, unless the college's governing board chose to participate in the charitable contribution program.

CSHB 2491 would take effect September 1, 1997.

SUPPORTERS SAY: CSHB 2491 would relieve junior colleges of the responsibility for participating in a program that does not serve its intended purpose because the cost of administering the program is too high. Many junior colleges are small and have few employees, so the level of contributions is often too low to justify the administrative costs associated with the state program. Charitable institutions would receive a greater benefit if individuals at these

institutions donated directly to the charity rather than channeling their contributions through a regional council.

Junior colleges that wanted to participate in the state employee charitable campaign would still have that option, but CSHB 2491 would clarify that they would not be required to do so.

OPPONENTS
SAY: No apparent opposition.

NOTES: The committee substitute amended a different section of the Government Code than the original version, and included more specific language that would exempt junior colleges from the charitable campaign.