

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 4383
By: Murphy
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Colleges and universities offer multiple types of tuition fee structures, including fixed-rate tuition, in which the rate remains constant throughout a certain number of semesters for students, and flat-rate tuition, in which a single tuition price is set for variable course loads. There are concerns that these types of tuition rates and their potential benefits may not be adequately understood by students and their families if the college or university does not provide clear communication relating to pricing mechanisms. C.S.H.B. 4383 seeks to address these concerns by requiring certain institutions to provide specified information relating to fixed and flat tuition rates to students and on the institution website.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 4383 amends the Education Code to require a general academic teaching institution, other than a public state college, with a fixed tuition price plan for entering undergraduate students and a general academic teaching institution that offers a fixed tuition rate program for certain transfer students to provide information explaining the effect of the plan or program on the calculation of a student's cost per credit hour, including the institution's current fixed tuition rate, and clearly describing the amount of tuition a student would pay for varying course loads covered by the plan or program as follows:

- to each entering undergraduate student or transferring undergraduate student, as applicable, at the time the student is offered the opportunity to participate in the institution's plan or program;
- for a student enrolled in the institution's plan or program, in materials or correspondence provided to the student each time the student registers for a semester or other term and in each tuition billing statement;
- on the institution's website; and
- in any financial aid information provided to students.

C.S.H.B. 4383 requires a public institution of higher education that offers a flat-rate tuition plan, under which the institution charges a student for a specified number of credit hours regardless of the number of credit hours in which the student enrolls, to provide information explaining the effect of the plan on the calculation of a student's cost per credit hour, including the institution's

current flat rate of tuition, and clearly describing the amount of tuition a student would pay for varying course loads covered by the plan as follows:

- to each entering undergraduate student;
- in materials or correspondence provided to the student each time the student registers for a semester or other term and in each tuition billing statement;
- on the institution's website; and
- in any financial aid information provided to students.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 4383 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute includes provisions not in the original requiring a public institution of higher education that offers a flat-rate tuition plan to provide specified information.