

- SUBJECT:** Higher education institution priority for training state agency employees
- COMMITTEE:** Technology, Economic Development, and Workforce — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 6 ayes — Strama, Parker, F. Brown, Eissler, Gattis, Harless
0 nays
3 absent — Button, Ritter, Rodriguez
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Remmele Young, Houston Community College)
Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Government Code, ch. 656 regulates state agency job notices and training. Current law authorizes a state agency to contract with another state, local, or federal department, agency, or institution, including a state-supported college or university, to train or educate its administrators and employees.

Programs can include preparing for technological and legal developments, increasing work capabilities, and increasing the competence of state employees.
- DIGEST:** HB 4054 would require a state agency to use a higher education institution to provide training to its administrators and employees if the training were of comparable quality but lower cost, on subject matter required by the agency, in the geographic area of the administrator or employee, and according to a schedule acceptable to the agency.

The agency also could use the higher education institution to supplement training provided by agency employees for other employees. A state agency could not contract with a private person to provide employee training if the agency was required to use a higher education institution to provide the training.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2009, and would only apply to a contract entered into on or after that date.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

Even though current law authorizes state agencies to use colleges or universities to train and educate its employees, it is not always practiced. The bill would serve as a reminder to state agencies that colleges and universities might be in a position to offer an array of training courses and may be able to provide quality training and education at a lower cost than private entities. Agencies would be required to use colleges and universities only if the institutions met certain requirements, such as providing the training at a comparable quality but lower cost.

This approach would be a good use of existing resources at higher education institutions, especially for the state's technical colleges and community colleges, because they have a variety of technical and workforce-enhancing course offerings. If no comparable educational or training services were available at a college or university that met the needs or schedule of an agency, the agency could follow its current practices for obtaining such employee training.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.