

SUBJECT: Creating an extension center of the Texas State Technical College System

COMMITTEE: Appropriations — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 23 ayes — Pitts, Sylvester Turner, Ashby, Bell, G. Bonnen, Carter, Darby, S. Davis, Dukes, Giddings, Howard, Hughes, S. King, Márquez, McClendon, Muñoz, Orr, Otto, Patrick, Price, Raney, Ratliff, Zerwas

0 nays

4 absent — Crownover, Gonzales, Longoria, Perry

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Chris Cornell, Reece Albert, Inc.)

On — Mike Reeser, Texas State Technical College System; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Gary Hendricks, Texas State Technical College System)

BACKGROUND: Education Code, sec. 135.02(a) establishes the constituent parts of the Texas State Technical College System. The system office is located in Waco. Campuses are located in Harlingen, Marshall, and Waco. A West Texas campus is distributed between Abilene, Breckenridge, Brownwood, and Sweetwater.

DIGEST: HB 3640 would add an extension center in Ellis County to the Texas State Technical College System.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2013.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 3640 would help Ellis County meet the needs of its rapidly growing population and business community for post-secondary educational opportunities. The new Texas State Technical College (TSTC) extension center in Ellis County would serve the citizens of Ellis and surrounding

counties just south of Dallas-Fort Worth. It would develop and offer highly specialized technical programs with related supportive coursework, placing primary consideration on the industrial and technological vocational needs of the region and the state.

Ellis County is a suitable location for the extension because it already is home to Navarro Junior College, a Multi-Institutional Teaching Center, and the Southwestern Assemblies of God campus. The new extension center would provide more expansive and technical options for students seeking post-secondary education. The emphasis of the proposed TSTC extension center in Ellis County would be on advanced or emerging technical programs not commonly offered at public junior colleges.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

According to the fiscal note, the bill would cost the state \$10.8 million in general revenue over the next biennium. The state must be unusually careful when making large on-going financial commitments that have may only regional impact.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, HB 3640 would have a negative impact of about \$10.8 million to general revenue related funds in fiscal 2014-15 due to the cost of employee benefits, formula funding, tuition revenue bond debt service, and special items required to establish and operate the extension center.