

SUBJECT: Allowing certain military dependents to enroll full-time in TxVSN

COMMITTEE: Public Education — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 8 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Bohac, Deshotel, Gooden, Koop, Meyer, VanDeaver

0 nays

3 absent — Allen, Dutton, K. King

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 19 — 31-0

WITNESSES: *On House companion bill, HB 539:*
For — Marie Hossfeld, Texas Virtual Academy; Juliet Jones, Shea Mackin, and Rosetta Slamcik, Publicschooloptions.org; Sarah Robinson and Adriana Steinhaus, K12; (*Registered, but did not testify*): Ellen Arnold, Texas PTA; Amy Beneski, Texas Association of School Administrators; Addie Gomez, Texans for Quality Public Charter Schools; Miranda Goodsheller, Texas Association of Business; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Amanda List, ResponsiveEd; Marlene Lobberecht, League of Women Voters of Texas; Matt Matthews, Connections Education; Mike Meroney, Huntsman Corporation, BASF Corporation, Texas Workforce Coalition; Shannon Noble, Texas Air Conditioning Contractors Association; Stephanie Simpson, Texas Association of Manufacturers; Annie Spilman, National Federation of Independent Business/Texas; Scott Stewart, Texas Chemical Council; Michael White, Texas Construction Association)

Against — None

On — Kara Belew and Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency

BACKGROUND: The Texas Education Agency administers the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides students and schools with access to quality online courses and instructors.

Education Code, sec. 30A.002(b) states that students are eligible to enroll full time in courses provided through the virtual school network only if the student was enrolled in a Texas public school in the preceding school year or has been placed in substitute care, regardless of whether the student was enrolled in a Texas public school in the preceding school year.

DIGEST: SB 587 would make eligible to enroll full-time in courses provided through the Texas Virtual School Network a student who had been enrolled in a publicly funded school outside of Texas in the preceding year and was the dependent of a U.S. military member deployed or transferred to Texas.

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, 2017, and would apply beginning with the 2017-18 school year.

NOTES: According to the Legislative Budget Board's fiscal note, SB 587 would cost the Foundation School Program an additional \$665,463 for fiscal 2018-19.

The House approved SB 587, considered in lieu of a companion bill, HB 539 by VanDeaver, on May 12.