

- SUBJECT:** Requiring online admission applications to link to employment data
- COMMITTEE:** Higher Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — C. Turner, Stucky, Button, Frullo, Howard, E. Johnson, Pacheco, Schaefer, Smithee, Walle
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Wilson
- WITNESSES:** For — Alexis Taylor, 3 Day Startup; Thomas Lindsay, Texas Public Policy Foundation; Madeline Krebs; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Ashley Williams, Center for Public Policy Priorities; Mike Meroney, Texas Association of Manufacturers; Justin Yancy, Texas Business Leadership Council)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code sec. 7.040 requires the Texas Education Agency to collaborate with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to collect information comparing institutions of higher education in the state.
- The collected information must compare higher education institutions on cost, student retention and graduation rates, average debt and loan repayment rates, and student employment rate. The information must identify the state's future workforce needs and include annual wage information for the top 10 highest demand jobs in the state, as identified by the TWC. Public school students may request this information, and every institution of higher education must include the information on its website.
- DIGEST:** HB 277 would require electronic common admission application forms adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to include a prominent link to a website containing comparative gainful

employment data on higher education institutions, including information collected by the Texas Education Agency. THECB would maintain the website using data compiled in coordination with the Texas Workforce Commission.

THECB and the governing board of a university system would implement this change as soon as practicable following the effective date but not later than January 1, 2020.

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, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 277 would help students applying to post-secondary institutions make informed decisions on the schools they wanted to attend and their chosen fields of study. Requiring electronic admission forms to include a link to data on job market conditions and the comparative costs and benefits of higher education institutions would give students better access to this information.

Although this information already has been gathered by state agencies, a student must request it through a guidance counselor to obtain it. HB 277 would remove this barrier, improving students' access to information and helping them focus on an academic path that would lead to full-time employment upon graduation. This could lower the cost of education, as fewer students would need to return to school to obtain a marketable degree, and could increase the number of workers in critical job markets.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

HB 277 would create an unnecessary mandate for state agencies. Providing information related to career opportunities and in-demand jobs is the function of the private sector, and such activity should continue without government interference.