

SUBJECT: Authorizing IT credential programs for certain state jobs

COMMITTEE: State Affairs

VOTE: 11 ayes — Hunter, Hernandez, Anchía, Dean, Geren, Metcalf, Raymond, Slawson, Spiller, Thompson, Turner

0 nays

2 absent — Guillen, Smithee

WITNESSES: For — Gaye Lynn Scott, Texas Association of Community Colleges (*Registered, but did not testify*: Patrick Brophay, North Texas Commission; Servando Esparza, TechNet; Renzo Soto, Texas 2036; Calvin Tillman)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Henry Bohnert)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Lisa Jammer, Department of Information Resources)

DIGEST: CSHB 584 would allow the Department of Information Resources (DIR) to enter into an agreement with a public junior college district or public technical institution to offer a program leading to a state information technology credential.

The bill would require the programs to be approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, develop the knowledge and skills needed for an entry-level IT position at a state agency, and include a one-year apprenticeship. The apprenticeship could be with DIR or another relevant state agency, an organization working on a major information resources project, or a regional network security center.

The executive director of DIR would be required to update the intra-agency career ladder program to allow for an associate degree with an IT credential to be substituted for a four-year degree. The classification

officer in the state auditor's office would be required to determine whether an associate degree with an IT credential could be substituted for a four-year degree and to revise relevant state job descriptions.

The bill would allow for an IT credential program that was not fully funded through tuition or other money available for that purpose to be paid for with any money available to DIR. A program also could solicit and accept public or private gifts, grants, and donations for funding.

The bill would require DIR to analyze annually whether entering into such agreements was appropriate to assist the department in meeting staffing needs.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 584 would expand access to tailored curriculum and training for community college and technical institute students that would prepare them to work in the IT field. The bill would help state agencies address the shortage of eligible candidates to work in IT jobs that the agencies require as the current workforce nears retirement. The bill also would help support the state's community colleges and technical institutes in offering more courses to their local communities.

**CRITICS
SAY:**

No concerns identified.