

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 2993
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Education
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Engrossed

DIGEST

Currently, institutions of higher education are requesting governing board authority to waive certain fees charged to students who take courses, but who are not using campus-based student services. Students who take courses via distance learning represent students who often do not require certain services such as the student health center, but are still required to pay fees for this service. This bill enables the governing board of an institution of higher education to waive certain fees.

PURPOSE

As proposed, H.B. 2993 enables the governing board of an institution of higher education to waive certain fees.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 54E, Education Code, by adding Section 54.546, as follows:

Sec. 54.546. **AUTHORITY OF GOVERNING BOARD TO WAIVE MANDATORY AND VOLUNTARY FEES.** Authorizes the governing board of an institution of higher education to waive any fee or fees for which it has authority to assess, regardless of whether the fee is mandatory, when it deems that the student cannot be reasonable expected to have access to the activities, services, or facilities for which the fee is charged. Authorizes the board to waive fees for other specific categories of students when it deems that it is in the best interest if the institution or that it is crucial to the viability of an academic initiative to do so. Requires the governing board to ensure that waiving said fees will not result in the institution's inability to generate adequate funds to service any debt to which the fee collections are obligated or to support the service and/or facility for which the fee is charged. Prohibits the governing board of an institution of higher education from waiving payment of tuition or lab fees except as provided within this code. Authorizes the board to limit accordingly the participation of a student in the activities or access to services and facilities financed by the fee or fees so waived.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.