

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 811
By: Truan
International Relations, Trade & Technology
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As Filed

DIGEST

According to the International Relations, Trade & Technology Committee Interim Report, the coming century promises to present the world's trading sector with unprecedented opportunities, challenges and innovative ways to conduct business. Emerging telecommunications technologies and the application of these technologies will play an increasingly important role in the success of small- and medium-sized businesses. One of the more promising new technologies for such businesses interested in international commerce is video teleconferencing. Currently, the majority of Texas' university system schools have these technologies in place. This bill would require each Texas institution of higher education that includes or is affiliated with a small business development center to make its teleconferencing facilities available to the center.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 811 to require each institution of higher education that includes or is affiliated with a small business development center to make its teleconferencing facilities available to the center.

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 51Z, Education Code, by adding Section 51.9125, as follows:

Sec. 51.9125. USE OF TELECONFERENCING FACILITIES TO ASSIST SMALL BUSINESS. (a) Requires each institution of higher education that includes or is affiliated with a small business development center to make its teleconferencing facilities available to the center at reasonable times when those facilities are not in use for other purposes of the institution. Authorizes a small business development center to use those teleconferencing facilities when available to assist small businesses in this state to expand their trade links outside of this state.

(b) Requires each institution of higher education that operates teleconferencing facilities, if requested to do so by the District Export Council organized by the United States Department of Commerce for the region in which the institution is located, to consult with that council to discuss the feasibility of permitting the council to have access to those facilities to assist small businesses in this state to expand their trade links outside of this state.

(c) Requires a small business development center or District Export Council that uses teleconferencing facilities under this section to reimburse the institution of higher education for the use of the facilities. Prohibits the institution from charging the center or council a higher rate for use of those facilities than it charges any other person.

(d) Defines "institution of higher education."

(e) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2002.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.