

## BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center  
76R7241 JSA-D

S.B. 1535  
By: West  
Higher Education  
4/9/1999  
As Filed

### DIGEST

Currently, many students enter higher education through public and private junior colleges and the state's technical colleges. S.B.1535 would create the Texas Rising Star Scholarship Program for public junior college students.

### PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1535 creates the Texas Rising Star Scholarship Program for public junior college students.

### RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the comptroller of public accounts in SECTION 1 (Section 56.308(d), Education Code) of this bill.

### SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 56, Education Code, by adding Subchapter M, as follows:

#### SUBCHAPTER M. TEXAS RISING STAR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Sec. 56.301. DEFINITION. Defines "eligible institution."

Sec. 56.302. PROGRAM NAME; PURPOSE. Provides that the student financial assistance program authorized by this subchapter is known as the Texas Rising Star Scholarship Program (program), and an individual scholarship awarded under this subchapter is known as a rising star scholarship (scholarship). Provides that the purpose of this subchapter is to provide a grant of money to enable qualified students to attend public junior colleges in this state.

Sec. 56.303. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM. Provides that the governing board of each eligible institution administers the program for its students and determines to which students a scholarship is awarded.

Sec. 56.304. ELIGIBLE PERSON. Requires a person to meet certain criteria in order to be initially eligible for a rising star scholarship. Provides that a person is not eligible to receive a scholarship if the person has been granted a baccalaureate degree. Prohibits a person from receiving a scholarship for more than 75 semester credit hours or the equivalent.

Sec. 56.305. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS. Authorizes a person, after initially qualifying for a scholarship, to continue to receive a scholarship during each semester or term in which the person is enrolled at an eligible institution only if the person meets certain academic criteria. Prohibits a person from receiving a scholarship during the next semester or term in which the person enrolls if the person fails to meet the academic criteria. Authorizes a person to become eligible to receive a scholarship in a subsequent semester or term if the person meets certain requirements.

Sec. 56.306. SCHOLARSHIP USE. Authorizes a person receiving a scholarship to use the money for any usual and customary education-related expenses incurred by the student, including payment for certain items. Prohibits an eligible institution from requiring a person to use the money to pay tuition and fees.

Sec. 56.307. SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT. Provides that the amount of a scholarship is determined by the governing board of the eligible institution. Authorizes the amount of a scholarship to be reduced by any gift aid the person receives from another source.

Sec. 56.308. FUNDING. Provides that the program is funded by a combination of local funds and state appropriations as provided by this section. Sets forth provisions regarding funding of the program, including the solicitation and acceptance of gifts, grants, and donations, and procedures for obtaining state funds. Authorizes an eligible institution to use state funds received under this section for a fiscal year only to the extent the institution awards at least twice that amount in scholarships in the same fiscal year from gifts, grants, and donations. Requires the comptroller to establish procedures for the administration of this section, including procedures to ensure that state funds appropriated for the program are used exclusively to provide scholarships in accordance with this subchapter and to recover funds not used in accordance with this subchapter.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2000-2001 fiscal year. Requires the Comptroller of Public Accounts to establish procedures for the administration of Section 56.308, Education Code, not later than January 1, 2000.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.

Effective date: upon passage.