

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1780
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Higher Education
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, public junior colleges and public technical institutions in Texas provide technical and vocational programs to meet workforce demands, and in some instances adapt their programs to meet the needs of local businesses. The costs of developing or redesigning a program have been shouldered either solely by the college or institute, or in partnership with another entity. S.B. 1780 establishes the high priority program fund and requires the comptroller of public accounts to appropriate awards from the fund to an eligible college or institute in an amount recommended by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1780 creates a high priority program fund to support vocational and technical education.

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 Title 3H, Education Code, by adding Chapter 151, as follows:

CHAPTER 151. HIGH PRIORITY PROGRAM FUND

Sec. 151.001. DEFINITIONS. Defines “coordinating board,” “high priority program,” “high priority program fund,” “public junior college,” and “public technical institute.”

Sec. 151.002. ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE. Sets forth the propose of the high priority program (program). Provides that the high priority program fund (fund) is established as a means to accomplish this purpose. Provides that providing appropriate funds to public junior colleges and public technical institutes for programs is important to this state’s welfare and is an important public purpose for the expenditure of state funds. Provides that the fund is intended to enhance the state’s economic growth by enhancing business competitiveness encouraging businesses and industries to locate and expand in the state.

Sec. 151.003. ADMINISTRATION; GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES. Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (board) to administer the fund. Requires the board to determine whether a public junior college or public technical institution is eligible to receive an award from the fund. Requires a public junior college or public technical institute to demonstrate to the board certain provisions, to be eligible to receive an award. Requires the board, in consultation with public junior colleges and public technical institutes, to adopt guidelines and procedures for the administration of this chapter.

Sec. 151.004. FUNDING. Provides that the fund is funded by appropriations and by gifts, grants, and donations made for that purpose. Requires the comptroller to issue warrants to each eligible public junior college or public technical institute in the amount certified by the board to the comptroller, from money appropriated from the fund. Authorizes the money to be expanded by the public junior college or public technical institute only to support the development, design, upgrade, renovation, or expansion of specific programs for which the award is made and may not be expanded for the general support of ongoing instruction at the public junior college or public

technical institute. Authorizes money to be expended for facilities if necessary for the development, upgrade, revision, or expansion of a program and approved by the board. Authorizes money appropriated from the fund to be used to match a grant provided by private industry for a particular program at an eligible public junior college or public technical institute. Provides that supplies, materials, services, or equipment purchased by a public junior college or public technical institute with money received under this chapter are not subject to the authority of the General Services Commission.

Sec. 151.005. PROGRESS REPORTS. Requires a public junior college or public technical institute receiving money under this chapter to report on the progress of the funded high priority program to the board not later than September 1 of each year of the program, until the board provides that further progress reports are not required.

Sec. 151.006. MERIT REVIEW. Requires the board to evaluate the effectiveness of this chapter and programs receiving money under this chapter and report its findings to the Legislative Budget Board not later than September 1 of the second year of each state fiscal biennium.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 1999.

SECTION. 3. Emergency clause.