

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 3524
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Education
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Engrossed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Under current law, students who attend an institution of higher education (institution) are charged tuition and fees based on the number of semester credit hours taken. The differing rate charges for students who take more than twelve semester credit hours could cause confusion among students and parents. A simplified and more uniform tuition rate may create more of an incentive for students to take heavier course loads and move more quickly towards graduation, while addressing the differing tuition rate fee structures in various degree programs within the institution. H.B. 3524 authorizes the board of regents of The University of Texas System to establish a flat rate tuition pilot project at The University of Texas at Austin within a specified period that applies to all undergraduate students enrolled in a college or degree program included in the pilot project.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 54B, Education Code, by adding Section 54.069, as follows:

Sec. 54.069. FLAT RATE TUITION PILOT PROJECT. (a) Defines "tuition."

(b) Authorizes the board of regents of The University of Texas System (board), notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, to establish a pilot project at The University of Texas at Austin involving not more than two colleges or degree programs designated by the board of regents under which the university charges the same amount of tuition to all undergraduate students enrolled in a college or degree program included in the pilot project.

(c) Prohibits the board from requiring a full-time student who pays tuition under the pilot project to pay more tuition than the average amount of tuition that a student not included in the pilot project would pay for enrolling in the university for 14 semester credit hours for the same semester or term.

(d) Requires the board to evaluate the effect of flat rate tuition charged under the pilot project on the number of semester credit hours taken by students included in the project each semester. Requires the board to report the results of the evaluation to the legislature not later than December 31, 2002, and December 31, 2004.

(e) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2005.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.