

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R636 KSD-D

S.B. 349
By: Truan
Education
2/8/2001
As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, the challenges to higher education are changing as Texas experiences growth in population, changes in demographics, and evolution of its economy. In 1999, Lieutenant Governor Rick Perry created the Commission on 21st Century Colleges and Universities to study the state of higher education in Texas, identify the state's higher education needs for the 21st century and make recommendations to address those needs. However, the commission's mandate ended with the submission of its report to the 77th Legislature. As proposed, S.B. 349 continues the commission with a sunset date in 12 years, and defines its composition and mission.

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 Title 3B, Education Code, by adding Chapter 64, as follows:

CHAPTER 64. COMMISSION ON 21ST CENTURY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Sec. 64.001. DEFINITIONS. Defines "commission," "coordinating board," and "institution of higher learning."

Sec. 64.002. SUNSET PROVISION. Subjects the Commission on 21st Century Colleges and Universities (commission) to Chapter 325, Government Code (Texas Sunset Act) and unless continued in existence as provided in this chapter, abolishes the commission and provides that this chapter expires September 1, 2013.

Sec. 64.003. NATURE AND COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION. Provides that the commission is an advisory commission composed of 15 voting members and sets forth the composition of the commission. Provides that the chairman of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (coordinating board) serves as a nonvoting member of the commission. Requires the speaker of the house of representatives and the lieutenant governor to jointly select the presiding officer from the voting members of the commission. Authorizes the commission to designate other officers as deemed appropriate by the commission.

Sec. 64.004. TERMS; VACANCIES. Sets forth the length and the expiration date of terms for senate, house of representative and public members of the commission. Provides the procedure for filling a vacancy on the commission.

Sec. 64.005. POWERS AND DUTIES. Requires the commission to conduct studies and make findings and recommendations the commission finds appropriate regarding ways to prepare and enhance the state's higher education system. Sets forth certain issues the commission will focus on. Authorizes the commission to request assistance and information

from the coordinating board and any public institution of higher education in this state, except for confidential information relating to an individual.

Sec. 64.006. FUNDING. Provides that the expenses of the commission, including the compensation of necessary staff, may be paid from certain appropriate funds. Authorizes the legislature to appropriate funds to support the commission.

Sec. 64.007. BIENNIAL REPORT. Requires the commission to prepare and deliver a biennial report to certain offices not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year. Requires the report to include any recommendations for legislative or administrative action the commission considers appropriate.

SECTION 2. Sets forth certain requirements in the appointment of the initial members of the commission by the appointing entities and sets forth the commencement and expiration date of the initial terms of the commission members.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.