

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
79R7415 JRJ-F

S.B. 801
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S/C on Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current Texas law authorizes The University of Texas at Brownsville to collect student union fees under Section 54.546, Education Code. A proposed campus fitness complex contains several facilities that will make the university more appealing to prospective students and provide fitness opportunities that are lacking for current students. Access to a wellness center leads to improved health of the entire campus community.

As proposed, S.B. 801 authorizes the board of regents of The University of Texas System to impose a student-supported fee to fund a wellness, recreational, and fitness complex at The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College.

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 Subchapter E, Chapter 54, Education Code, by adding Section 54.550, as follows:

Sec. 54.550. WELLNESS, RECREATIONAL, AND FITNESS COMPLEX FEE; THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT BROWNSVILLE. (a) Authorizes the board of regents (board) of The University of Texas System to charge each student enrolled at The University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) a wellness, recreational, and fitness complex fee (fee). Prohibits the amount from exceeding \$79 per student for each regular semester and \$39.50 per student for each term of the summer session.

(b) Authorizes the board to use the revenue collected to perform specific functions in relation of a wellness, recreational, and fitness complex and pledge revenue to pay an obligation issued under Subdivision (1) of the revenue financing system.

(c) Requires the board to deposit revenue from the fee to the credit of an account known as the UTB wellness, recreational, and fitness complex fee account. Requires the money in the account to be used in accordance with the terms of the partnership agreement entered into between UTB and Texas Southmost College (TSC) under Section 78.02 (Establishment; Scope).

(d) Prohibits the board from increasing the fee by more than 10 percent in any academic year unless the amount is approved by a majority vote of the students participating in a general student election and a majority of the members of the legislative body of the student government at that institution.

(e) Provides that a fee charged under this section is in addition to any other fee the board is authorized to charge by law.

(f) Requires the fee charged under this section, subject to the limitations of this section, to be in the same amount as the fee charged a student at TSC by the board

of trustees of the Southmost Union Junior College District. Provides that a student attending either or both may be charged a fee by only one institution.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective to the 2005 fall semester.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2005.