

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
82R30710 E

C.S.H.B. 2910
By: Branch, Dukes (Zaffirini)
Higher Education
5/21/2011
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

C.S.H.B. 2910 amends current law relating to agreements between the Texas higher Education Coordinating Board and certain organizations for increasing degree completion rates.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 61.0905, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Section 61.0905, as follows:

Sec. 61.0905. AGREEMENTS AND GRANTS TO INCREASE DEGREE COMPLETION RATES. (a) Authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to, in partnership with institutions of higher education, enter into an agreement with nonprofit organizations to assist THECB in identifying and implementing effective methods for increasing degree completion rates at institutions of higher education, including by:

- (1) identifying and promoting innovative models, emerging technology platforms, and best practices for increasing degree completion rates in areas including developmental education; financial assistance; student support services; and transfer or articulation agreements;
- (2) providing data, research, and evaluation support to assist THECB in assessing the effectiveness of pilot programs in increasing degree completion rates;
- (3) coordinating ongoing local, state, federal, and philanthropic initiatives to increase degree completion rates; and
- (4) determining the extent of implementation of degree completion rate improvement models across a region or the state and the effectiveness of the models as student population increases.

(b) Authorizes THECB by rule to establish a grant program to fund projects, including the award of a grant to a nonprofit organization that enters into an agreement with THECB under this section, related to the improvement of degree completion rates. Requires THECB by rule, if THECB establishes a grant program under this section, to prescribe the application procedure and criteria for awarding a grant.

(c) Authorizes grants awarded by THECB under this section to be funded by appropriations; and gifts, grants, or other donations.

(d) Requires THECB, not later than January 1, 2012, to report to the Joint Oversight Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence, and Transparency a description of:

(1) the types of nonprofit organizations eligible for a grant under this section;

(2) grants awarded under this section; and

(3) a survey of partnerships between other states and nonprofit organizations to increase degree completion rates, including identification of best practices.

(e) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2013.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.