

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1810
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Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In 2009, the legislature passed H.B. 4501 authorizing Texas Southern University (TSU) to charge an intercollegiate athletics fee up to \$10 per semester credit hour for the purpose of development and maintenance of intercollegiate athletic programs. H.B. 4501 provided that the fee could not be imposed unless the fee was approved by a majority of the students voting in an election held for that purpose or by a majority of the student government of the institution.

H.B. 4501 also prohibited the fee from being charged after the fifth academic year unless, before the end of that academic year, TSU had issued bonds payable in whole or in part from the fee, in which event the fee would be prohibited from being charged after the academic year in which all such bonds, including refunding bonds for those bonds, had been fully paid. This provision was to ensure that future classes were not forced to pay a fee that the original class authorized. Because the fee requested by TSU was never intended for construction, TSU has never issued any bonds. Therefore, H.B. 4501 required TSU to discontinue the collection of said fees unless a reauthorization to do so is granted by the state.

The fee that is to be discontinued as set forth in H.B. 4501 was approved by the students and it currently generates \$2,363,158—about 30 percent of the overall athletic budget. Most of the revenue generated by the fee has been used to strengthen compliance in the athletic program and for academic enhancement. Since the fee was first collected in 2009, graduation rates for student athletes have increased from 26 percent, which was among the nation's lowest, to 46 percent, and is expected to reach 62 percent in two years.

S.B. 1810 authorizes Texas Southern University to continue charging this fee if the university holds an election for this purpose and a majority of the students approve such fee.

As proposed, S.B. 1810 amends current law relating to an intercollegiate athletics fee at Texas Southern University.

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, as follows:

Sec. 54.5223. INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS FEE: TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY. (a)-(c) Makes no change to these subsections.

(e)-(f) Makes no change to these subsections.

(g) Prohibits the fee for intercollegiate athletics on each student enrolled at Texas Southern University authorized by the board of regents of Texas Southern University from being charged after the fifth academic year in which the fee is first charged unless, before the end of that academic year, the university has issued bonds payable in whole or in part from the fee, in which event the fee is

prohibited from being charged after the academic year in which all such bonds, including refunding bonds for those bonds, have been fully paid or unless reauthorized by a majority vote of the students of the university participating in a general student election held for that purpose.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2014.