

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 2109
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Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 2109 would require public institutions of higher education (IHE) to develop and implement a plan to prevent cases of sexual assault and unplanned pregnancy. The plan would call for distributing information and helpful resources as well as raising awareness via the use of special events, informative presentations as well as training sessions for students and student organizations.

S.B. 2109 seeks to enhance safety at public IHEs by adding Section 51.9364 to the Education Code. S.B. 2109 requires that IHE develop plans to prevent sexual assaults against their student populations.

By raising awareness through events, presentations and training sessions, students at public universities may feel more comfortable in reporting assaults and be more knowledgeable in understanding the processes to do so.

Nationwide, a college-aged woman is twice as likely to be assaulted as to be robbed. In 2014, 100 colleges and universities nationwide had at least 10 reports of rape on their campus. In recent years, universities in Texas have seen a surge in reports of sexual assault, harassment, stalking and rape. A University of Texas System (UT) report released earlier this month found that at UT-Austin, some 15 percent of female undergraduate students have been raped since their enrollment. The report also found that at UT-San Antonio and UT-Dallas, nine percent of female undergraduate students have been raped since their enrollment.

As proposed, S.B. 2109 amends current law relating to a requirement that each public institution of higher education develop and implement a strategic plan for the prevention of sexual assault and unplanned pregnancy.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 51.9364, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, by adding Section 51.9364, as follows:

Sec. 51.9364. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PREVENTION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND UNPLANNED PREGNANCY. (a) Defines "institution of higher education."

(b) Requires each institution of higher education (IHE) to develop and implement a strategic plan for the prevention of sexual assault on the IHE's campus and unplanned pregnancy among the students enrolled at the IHE.

(c) Requires the strategic plan to identify opportunities for raising awareness among, and providing information and resources to, students regarding campus sexual assault and unplanned pregnancy prevention, including through certain

methods, and be approved by the IHE's governing board before final adoption by the IHE.

(d) Requires each IHE, each biennium, to review the IHE's strategic plan and, with approval of the IHE's governing board, revise the plan as necessary.

(e) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), in consultation with IHEs, to adopt any rules THECB considers appropriate for the administration of this section.

SECTION 2. Requires THECB, not later than January 1, 2018, to adopt the rules required by Section 51.9364, Education Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. Requires each public IHE, not later than September 1, 2018, to develop and implement the strategic plan required by Section 51.9364, Education Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.