

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
86R21224 JRJ-D

H.B. 2140
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Higher Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

It has been suggested that the Texas Application for State Financial Aid, which is used to collect information to help determine eligibility for state student financial aid programs administered by institutions of higher education, uses an antiquated submission process requiring the application to be printed out and submitted as a paper document. H.B. 2140 seeks to modernize this submission process and increase access to the student financial aid application process by providing for the electronic submission of the application.

H.B. 2140 amends current law relating to creating an electronic application system for state student financial assistance.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 61.07762, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Section 61.07762, as follows:

Sec. 61.07762. APPLICATION FOR STATE FINANCIAL AID. (a) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to adopt procedures to allow a person to complete and submit the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) or a similar application for state student financial assistance by electronic submission through the Internet website through which THECB provides the common admission application form required by Section 51.762 (Common Admission Application Forms).

(a-1) Requires THECB to appoint an advisory committee composed of financial aid personnel at institutions of higher education and stakeholders who represent the needs of interested students to assist THECB in adopting the procedures required by Subsection (a) and to develop recommendations for that purpose. Requires THECB, not later than January 1, 2021, to report the advisory committee's recommendations to the standing committee of each house of the legislature with jurisdiction over higher education. Provides that this subsection expires January 1, 2023.

(b) Requires THECB, for the purposes of this section, to continuously maintain an online database of institutions of higher education to which state student financial assistance may be applied.

(c) Provides that the personal information of an individual maintained by THECB for the purposes of this section is confidential and is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552 (Public Information), Government Code.

(d) Authorizes THECB to adopt rules as necessary to implement this section.

SECTION 2. Provides that the changes in law made by this Act apply beginning with applications for state student financial assistance submitted for the 2022–2023 academic year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.