

## Exempting certain military dependents from exit-level TAKS requirement

SB 960 by Shapleigh (Haggerty)

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**DIGEST:** SB 960 would have allowed a student who was a dependent of a person serving in the military and who transferred into a public school system in Texas after the student's sophomore year in high school to satisfy requirements for passing the exit-level TAKS test through satisfactory performance on one or more alternative nationally recognized norm-referenced assessment instruments. The Texas Education Agency would have established required performance levels for the alternative assessments.

**GOVERNOR'S  
REASON FOR  
VETO:**

“Senate Bill 960 would exempt dependents of military personnel from passing the exit-level Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test if the students transfer into the Texas public school system after they complete their sophomore year in high school. Instead of taking the TAKS, the commissioner of education would determine appropriate performance levels on other nationally recognized norm-referenced assessment instruments in order to satisfy the graduation requirements and qualify for a Texas diploma.

“The strength of our accountability system is derived from having a common standard for all students. Allowing exemptions from this standard decreases the value of a Texas diploma. And I believe all students are capable of success.

“Instead of singling out a particular group of students, I am directing the Texas Education Agency to study the challenges faced by transfer students and propose viable options to address this problem to the 81st Legislature.”

**RESPONSE:** Neither Sen. Eliot Shapleigh, the bill's author, nor Rep. Pat Haggerty, the House sponsor, had a comment on the veto.

**NOTES:** SB 960 passed the House on the Local, Consent and Resolutions Calendar and was not analyzed in a *Daily Floor Report*.