

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2568
By: Morrison
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to interested parties, certain facilities are needed at the University of Houston-Victoria to support student engagement and provide amenities common to other institutions. The parties see a student center as the first step towards the university's goal of becoming a destination university that will enhance student and faculty recruitment and retention and foster enrollment growth. H.B. 2568 seeks to provide for a student center fee at the university to finance construction of a student center, with the support of the student government and the university's administration.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2568 amends the Education Code to authorize the board of regents of the University of Houston System to impose on each student enrolled at the University of Houston-Victoria a student center fee to be used only for the purpose of financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, improving, and equipping a student center at the university. The bill establishes that the fee is in addition to any use or service fee authorized to be imposed under other law. The bill requires the amount of the initial fee to be approved by a majority vote of the students enrolled at the university participating in a general student election held for that purpose. The bill prohibits the amount of the fee from exceeding \$150 per student for each regular semester, \$100 per student for each summer session of 10 weeks or longer, or \$50 per student for each summer session of less than 10 weeks.

H.B. 2568 requires revenue from the fee to be deposited to the credit of an account known as the University of Houston-Victoria student center fee account under the control of the university's student fee advisory committee. The bill requires the committee to annually submit to the president of the university its recommendation for any change to the amount of the fee and a complete and itemized budget for the student center with a complete report of all student center activities conducted during the past year and all expenditures made in connection with those activities. The bill requires the university president to submit the budget to the board of regents as part of the university's institutional budget and authorizes the board of regents to make changes in the budget that the board determines are necessary.

H.B. 2568 authorizes the board of regents to increase the fee amount but prohibits the board

from increasing the fee amount to an amount that exceeds the amount imposed during the previous academic year by more than 10 percent unless the amount of the increase is approved by a majority vote of students enrolled at the university participating in a general student election held for that purpose. The bill establishes that for purposes of determining whether to waive the fee, a student is not reasonably able to use the student center if the student lives more than 50 miles outside the corporate limits of Victoria, Texas.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.