

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3042
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Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been suggested that, though the availability of more paid internship opportunities would benefit students and advance state workforce development goals, the option for student off-campus employment under the current college work-study program may not sufficiently meet this need because of certain obstacles to implementation. H.B. 3042 seeks to provide a more effective option for facilitating paid internships by creating a separate, centrally organized and state-funded internship program and limiting the scope of the current work-study program to on-campus employment.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 4 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 3042 amends the Education Code to authorize the Texas Working Off-Campus: Reinforcing Knowledge and Skills (WORKS) internship program to provide jobs funded in part by the state to enable students to attend public, private, or independent institutions of higher education, explore career options, and strengthen marketable skills. The bill requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to administer the program and collaborate with participating employers to provide students with such employment. The bill limits state support for the program to the amount specified by appropriation. The bill requires the coordinating board to establish criteria to ensure the following:

- that each participating employer has demonstrated the administrative and financial capacity to carry out the employer's responsibilities under the program;
- that each participating employer is reimbursed under the program at the contracted rate only for eligible wages paid in full to a participating student; and
- that the marketable skills to be strengthened or gained through program internships have been identified.

H.B. 3042 requires the coordinating board to develop a standard contract establishing the roles and responsibilities of participating employers and requires the coordinating board to use the standard contract as a model for the memorandum of understanding that the coordinating board will require for participation in the program. The bill requires the coordinating board to reimburse a participating employer at the contracted rate for the eligible wages paid by the employer to a student participating in the program. The bill authorizes the coordinating board to

use funds appropriated for the Texas college work-study program and the Texas WORKS internship program to establish and maintain an online portal for use by students and participating entities for purposes of the internship program and to cover the expenses and personnel costs of administering and assessing the internship program. The bill bases priority for funding on the criteria established by coordinating board rules if funding for the program is insufficient to cover the cost of all students seeking to participate. The bill establishes that funds received by students as eligible wages under the program are not considered as financial aid for the academic year in which they are earned.

H.B. 3042 authorizes the coordinating board to enter into agreements with employers that participate in the internship program and sets out eligibility criteria for a participating employer. The bill requires the coordinating board to adopt reasonable rules, consistent with the purposes and policies of the bill's provisions relating to the internship program, to enforce the requirements, conditions, and limitations provided by those provisions and to adopt rules necessary to ensure compliance with certain provisions of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 concerning nondiscrimination in admissions or employment.

H.B. 3042 requires the coordinating board to establish and maintain an online listing of internship program employment opportunities available to students that meets certain specifications. The bill requires the coordinating board, not later than January 1 of each odd-numbered year, to submit to each standing legislative committee with primary jurisdiction over higher education and to post on the coordinating board's website a report on the internship program. The bill requires the report to include the total number of students employed through the internship program, disaggregated by the location of the employment and the employer's status as a for-profit or nonprofit entity.

H.B. 3042 replaces the authorization for an eligible public institution of higher education or an eligible qualifying private or independent college, university, association, agency, institution, or facility to enter into agreements with employers that participate in the Texas college work-study program with an authorization for an eligible institution to employ eligible students in the work-study program. The bill removes the specification that the employment provided under that program is part-time employment. The bill repeals a provision which requires each eligible institution participating in the work-study program to ensure that at least 20 percent but not more than 50 percent of the employment positions provided through the program in an academic year are provided by eligible employers who are providing employment located off campus.

H.B. 3042 applies beginning with the 2020 summer session.

H.B. 3042 repeals Section 56.076(b), Education Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.