

- SUBJECT:** Amending campus funding within the Blinn Junior College system
- COMMITTEE:** Higher Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Zerwas, Clardy, Crownover, Martinez, Morrison, Raney, C. Turner
0 nays
2 absent — Howard, Alonzo
- WITNESSES:** For — Blanche Brick; Barbara Corbisier; Joseph Engle; Linda Jones; Jean Ricciardello Phelps; Victoria Sharpe; Susan Slowey; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Nelson Salinas, Texas Association of Business)

Against — Wesley Brinkmeyer, Page Michel, and Randy Weidemann, Washington County Chamber Of Commerce (*Registered, but did not testify*: Richard Rhodes, Texas Association of Community Colleges; Luther Hueske; Washington County; Jane Hinze, Washington County Chamber of Commerce)

On — Ana M. Guzman and Carolyn Miller, Blinn College; Joseph Dunn, City of Bryan (*Registered, but did not testify*: Richard O'Malley, Kelli Shomaker, Blinn College; Milton Tate, City of Brenham)
- DIGEST:** CSHB 1903 would require the Blinn Junior College District to distribute the total amount of funds the district received from tuition and fees collected and contact hour appropriations to each of its campuses every state fiscal biennium in proportion to the percent of the total amount of tuition and fees that were collected at each campus. This change would apply only to Blinn College campuses with a student enrollment of at least 1,000 students and would apply beginning with the state fiscal biennium ending August 31, 2017.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take

effect September 1, 2015.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 1903 would remedy a difficult and inequitable funding situation in the Blinn College system, which has four campuses, including its flagship in Brenham and a fast-growing campus in Bryan. While Bryan has experienced huge enrollment growth and academic achievement over the past several years, it has not received funding from the Blinn College system sufficient to meet infrastructure needs. As a result, it is overcrowded and having difficulty serving students properly, which has hurt the school's ability to succeed.

The funds received from the flagship campus in Brenham are not proportionate to enrollment, which is much higher at the Bryan campus, nor does the funding reflect the different academic programs offered at Bryan. The bill would help address these deficiencies by requiring funding from the Blinn College administration that would reflect what the Bryan campus contributes to overall funding in tuition and fees. While there may be internal steps being taken, the bill would provide a more formal and reasoned response.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

CSHB 1903 would not resolve the larger issue at play at Blinn College, which is how community colleges in general are funded. Taxing districts, a main feature of state community college funding, present challenges when it comes to college systems with campuses in different counties. Rather than addressing this larger issue, the bill would target one college.

In addition, the Brenham campus of Blinn College plays a significant role in the local workforce pipeline. Diverting funds from the flagship campus would have a detrimental effect on the entire region. Blinn College's administration already has an internal, local plan of action to address the funding issues that this bill attempts to repair.