

SUBJECT: Exempting certain students from the Texas Success Initiative assessment

COMMITTEE: Higher Education — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 11 ayes — C. Turner, Stucky, Button, Frullo, Howard, E. Johnson, Pacheco, Schaefer, Smithee, Walle, Wilson

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — Chandra Villanueva, Center for Public Policy Priorities; Tanya Haug, Educational Testing Service; Randy Trask, GED Testing Service; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Brian Smith, GED Testing Service; Traci Berry, Goodwill Central Texas; William Fullerton, Texas Aspires; Justin Yancy, Texas Business Leadership Council; Drew Scheberle, The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jerel Booker, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board)

BACKGROUND: Education Code ch. 51 subch. F-1 establishes the Texas Success Initiative and requires institutions of higher education to use instruments designated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to assess student readiness to perform freshman-level academic coursework. Sec. 51.338 allows institutions of higher education to exempt certain students from this assessment requirement.

Some have suggested that students who achieve certain scores on a high school equivalency exam should be able to bypass additional assessment requirements.

DIGEST: CSHB 1891 would exempt students who achieved a certain score on a high school equivalency exam from the assessment requirements of the Texas Success Initiative. The score that would allow a student to be exempted from this requirement would be set by the Texas Higher

Education Coordinating Board, and the commissioner of higher education would establish the period for which the exemption would be valid.

The bill would apply beginning with the assessment of entering undergraduate students at public institutions of higher education for the 2020 fall semester.

This bill would take effect September 1, 2019.