

SUBJECT: Revising provisions on accreditation of certain institutions

COMMITTEE: Higher Education — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — Kuempel, Paul, Burns, Burrows, Clardy, Raney
4 nays — Cole, M. González, Howard, Lalani
1 absent — Bucy

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, (May 1) — 29 - 02

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jenn Saenz, Hallmark University; Erin Valdez, Texas Public Policy Foundation)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Eli Melendrez, Texas American Federation of Teachers)

On — Elizabeth Mayer, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

BACKGROUND: Since the U.S. Department of Education removed the requirement for universities to be accredited by regional accreditors assigned to them in 2019, some have suggested provisions referencing the Texas regional accreditor, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, should be updated to reflect these changes.

DIGEST: SB 1987 would remove references to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools from the definition of a recognized accrediting agency and from statute relating to the accreditation of universities and colleges. References to the association in such provisions would be replaced with the phrase "a recognized accrediting agency."

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board could approve private or independent colleges or universities that met the definition of private or independent institutions of higher education as it applied on January 1, 2023, with references to the association removed.

SB 1987
House Research Organization
page 2

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.