

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 576
By: Sibley
Finance
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As Filed

DIGEST

S.B. 576 creates the Texas New Horizons Scholarship Fund, which will award scholarships to recipients who meet certain criteria, including the socioeconomic background of the student, whether the student's parents have received baccalaureate degrees, whether the student is a resident of an urban area or a rural area for which recognized socioeconomic indicators are lower than the average in similar areas, and the student's performance on standardized tests. This bill also requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt rules necessary for the administration and establishment of the scholarships, and, after determining the amount of money available and the number of scholarships, to issue the scholarships to the recipients.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 576 creates the Texas New Horizons Scholarship Fund and sets forth provisions regarding its administration.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board under SECTION 1 (Section 54.216(b), Education Code), of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 54D, Education Code, by adding Section 54.216, as follows:

Sec. 54.216. TEXAS NEW HORIZONS SCHOLARSHIP FUND. Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (coordinating board) to issue scholarships, in a number to be determined by the coordinating board after reviewing the total amount of money available to the Texas new horizons scholarship fund, to qualified high school graduates. Authorizes a scholarship to be used by the recipient to attend any institution of higher education and exempts the recipient from the payment of tuition and required fees during the recipient's undergraduate enrollment at the institution. Requires the coordinating board to adopt rules as necessary for the administration of this section. Sets forth the criteria for awarding a scholarship. Sets forth requirements for the coordinating board regarding the publication of the criteria. Requires the coordinating board to award scholarships from the amount available in the Texas new horizons scholarship fund. Provides that the fund consists of amounts appropriated to the fund, including gifts or grants to the fund. Authorizes the coordinating board to accept gifts, grants, or donations from any person for the purposes of this section.

SECTION 2. (a) Effective date: September 1, 1997, except as provided by Subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt criteria for awarding scholarships under Section 54.216, Education Code, as added by this Act, not later than December 1, 1997. Requires the board to use those criteria in awarding any scholarships awarded before September 1, 1998.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.