

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R5829 KEL-D

C.S.S.B. 947
By: Barrientos
Higher Education
3/30/1999
Committee Report (Substituted)

DIGEST

Currently, the student union fee at the University of Texas at Austin is insufficient to meet the operation and maintenance needs of the facility. C.S.S.B. 947 would approve up to a 10 percent fee increase each semester not to exceed a maximum of \$33 each full semester and \$16.50 for each summer session, with a majority vote of the students.

PURPOSE

As proposed, C.S.S.B. 947 establishes the authority of the board of regents of the University of Texas System to increase the student union fee at the University of Texas at Austin.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 54.530(a), Education Code, to prohibit a compulsory fee from exceeding \$33 for each regular session and \$16.50 for each term of each summer session, unless the board of regents of the University of Texas System (board) increases the amount as provided by this subsection. Requires the money collected from the fees to be deposited into the Texas Union Fee Account. Authorizes the board to increase the amount of the fee, with the concurrence of the Student Fees Advisory Committee, by no more than 10 percent of the amount imposed in the preceding academic year. Authorizes the board to increase the amount of the fee to an amount that is no more than 10 percent of the amount imposed in the preceding academic year if that increase is approved by a majority of the votes of students in a general election. Prohibits the board from increasing the fee to an amount that is more than \$50 more for each regular semester and \$30 for each term of each summer session. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2. Requires a three member panel appointed and financed by the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin to conduct an external review of the Texas Union to insure the appropriate use of the student union fee imposed by Section 54.530, Education Code. Sets forth requirements for the review. Requires the review panel to make recommendations to the Texas Union board of directors on ways to improve facilities and operations, not later than the first day of the 2000 fall semester. Requires the Vice President for Student Affairs to compile a list of seven proposed members including certain experienced individuals. Prohibits the Vice President for Student Affairs from serving on the review panel. Requires the Vice President for Student Affairs to submit the list to a five-member student committee, which shall select three persons from the list to constitute the review panel. Requires the student committee to select another person if a vacancy occurs on the panel. Provides that the student committee selections are final unless a member is unable to serve, in which case a replacement must be selected. Requires the Vice President for Student Affairs to submit additional names to restore the list of members to seven if the list is less than five. Establishes that this section expires on January 1, 2001.

SECTION 3. Provides that SECTION 1 of this Act applies beginning with the 1999 fall semester. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

SECTION 1.

Amends Section 54.530(a), Education Code, to prohibit the board from increasing the fee to an amount that is more than \$50 for each regular semester and \$30 for each summer session term.

SECTION 2.

Sets forth the composition of and the requirements for members of a review panel charged by the Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin to conduct an external review of and make recommendations on appropriate use of the student union fee to the board of directors with regard to operations of the Texas Union. Renumbers subsequent SECTIONS.