

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1641
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Education
4/23/2001
Engrossed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, minority students and students from rural areas are underrepresented in the professional and graduate schools of Texas state universities. H.B. 1641 establishes certain criteria that may be utilized in making admission and scholarship decisions. H.B. 1641 also requires that the use of standardized tests in admission and scholarship decisions be utilized within certain parameters.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 51.823, Education Code) and SECTION 2, and to each general academic teaching institution and each medical and dental unit in SECTION 2 of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 51, Education Code, by adding Subchapter V, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER V. ADMISSION AND SCHOLARSHIP POLICIES FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

Sec. 51.821. DEFINITIONS. Defines “general academic teaching institution,” “graduate program,” and “professional program.”

Sec. 51.822. ADMISSION AND SCHOLARSHIP FACTORS FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS. (a) Authorizes a graduate or professional program of a general academic teaching institution or medical or dental unit to consider certain factors in making an admissions or scholarship decision for admissions into or competitive scholarships for the graduate or professional program.

(b) Authorizes an applicant’s performance on a standardized text to be used in the admissions or competitive scholarship process only to compare the applicant’s test score with those of other applicants from similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Provides that if an applicant’s performance on a standardized test is used for that purpose, it is required to be considered together with other compensatory criteria and is prohibited from accounting for more than 25 percent of the weight assigned to factors considered in the admission or competitive scholarship process.

(c) Requires each general academic teaching institution or medical and dental unit, within a certain period, to publish in the catalog of the institution or unit a description of the factors to be considered by the institution or unit in making those admissions and competitive scholarship decisions and to make the information available to the public.

(d) Provides that the requirements of Subsection (c) do not apply to admissions and competitive scholarships for the 2002 fall semester. Requires each institution or unit covered by Subsection (c) to make the required information available to the public and

to applicants to its graduate and professional programs not later than December 1, 2001, for the 2002 fall semester. Provides that this subsection expires September 1, 2002.

Sec. 51.823. RULEMAKING. Authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt rules relating to the operation of admissions and competitive scholarship processes under this subchapter.

SECTION 2. (a) Provides that the change in law made by this Act applies with the 2002-2003 academic year.

(b) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, each general academic teaching institution, and each medical and dental unit to adopt rules or policies relating to the admission of students and awarding of scholarships not later than December 1, 2001.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.