

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 3951  
By: Turner, Chris et al. (Davis, Wendy)  
Higher Education  
5/11/2009  
Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Despite the availability of a number of education-related benefits for veterans, such as the G.I. Bill and Hazlewood Act, many veterans are unable to reap their full benefits. Most institutions of higher education have an office of financial aid to assist veterans, but there is no assurance that the employees working in these offices are versed in all benefits and programs available to veterans.

This legislation requires an institution of higher education to ensure that at least one person in the institution's financial aid office is specifically trained to aid veterans and their family members with the education-related benefits available to them. The bill ensures that any veteran who wishes to use the benefits earned by serving our country has the understanding and resources necessary to obtain them.

H.B. 3951 relates to requiring a public institution of higher education to designate or employ a person trained in student financial assistance programs for military veterans and their families.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

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

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 56, Education Code, by adding Section 56.006, as follows:

Sec. 56.006. EMPLOYEE TRAINED IN STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS AND FAMILIES. (a) Requires each institution of higher education to ensure that one or more persons employed by the institution is trained in understanding state and federal student financial assistance programs available to military veterans or their family members, especially programs specifically applicable to military veterans or their family members and in assisting military veterans and eligible family members in understanding and obtaining the benefits available under those programs.

(b) Requires a person described by Subsection (a) to be available to assist persons as described by Subsection (a)(2) (relating to assisting military veterans and eligible family members in understanding and obtaining certain benefits) during regular business hours at the financial aid or other office to which the person is assigned.

(c) Requires the legislature to ensure that each institution receives adequate funding to cover the additional costs attributable to the requirements of this section and authorizes the legislature to appropriate money for that purpose.

SECTION 2. Requires a public institution of higher education to comply with Section 56.006, Education Code, as added by this Act, concerning employment of a person to provide student financial assistance for military veterans and their families not later than January 1, 2010.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.