

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
81R2622 KJM-D

S.B. 255
By: Estes
Higher Education
4/13/2009
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Midwestern State University (MSU) is a public liberal arts university, but is designated in statute as a state college. MSU became the first and only Texas university member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges in the summer of 2006. The students, faculty, and administration of MSU believe that this identifiable niche for the university will bring continued positive recognition.

Legislative authorization for MSU is contained in Chapter 103 (Midwestern State University), Education Code. The administration recommends changes to this statute to identify MSU as a public liberal arts university in Texas. This action has the support of the faculty, student body, administration, and board of regents of MSU. The commissioner of higher education has indicated his support of this change.

As proposed, S.B. 255 sets forth language to explain the mission of MSU and detail the university's goals by changing its designation from a state college to a public liberal arts university.

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 Section 103.07, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 103.07. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES. Requires the board of regents of Midwestern State University to build and operate a public liberal arts university, of the first rank to offer the university's students, consistent with the university's mission, preparation for excellence in a variety of careers and exploration of a variety of interests. Requires the university to be equipped as necessary to do its work as well as comparable public institutions of higher education in this state. Deletes existing text requiring the board of regents to build and operate a state college that will compare favorably with the other splendid colleges in Texas in the preparation of youth for the varied interests and industries in the section in which the university is located and requiring that this college be equipped to do its work as well as other state colleges.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.